

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 254

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2004

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

INSIDE



High-Tech Class

Junior students at the Saipan Southern High School recently got their own fully loaded laptop computers for school year 2004-05—one of three grants offered last year by the governor's Computers in the Classroom initiative.

Page 8



Cleaning Lady

Since she was a young girl, she has been particular with details. She was never her mother's headache when it came to fixing her things. She loved doing it so much that she made a business out of it.

Page 17



'Smart' Phones

The smart phone market will grow more crowded with the debut of two devices directed at opposite ends of the customer spectrum: a BlackBerry for consumers with a newfangled keyboard and a Nokia phone-organizer for mobile business professionals.

Page 34

Endangered Rota bird to get habitat protection

The Center for Biological Diversity and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reached a settlement yesterday that puts the Rota bridled white-eye—a forest-dwelling bird found only on the island of Rota in the CNMI—a crucial step closer to protection for its essential recovery habitat.

In the agreement, the Service conceded that its failure to map out and protect the white-eye's critical habitat at the time

it listed the species as endangered in January 2004 violated the Endangered Species Act. The Service agreed to come out with a proposed critical habitat designated by Sept. 7, 2005, and a final designated decision by Sept. 7, 2006.

"It's a shame that the Service refused to do anything to protect the white-eye's essential recovery habitat for over 20 years, while the bird's number declined by 90 percent," said Kieran Suckling,

executive director of the Center for Biological Diversity. "We hope that it's not too late to save the white-eye and that, with the Service's admission...that it violated the law, other imperiled species will not suffer the same fate."

Conservation groups petitioned the Department of the Interior to put the white-eye on the endangered list in 1980. The department agreed that the spe-

See **ENDANGERED** on Page 12



CUC facing \$2.5M shortfall

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. needs to raise \$2.5 million in a week to be able to meet its obligations, including a \$2.86 million payment to Mobil Marianas and the next payroll.

CUC comptroller Sohale Samari reported that, as of yesterday morning, the corporation had \$1.3 million in available cash. However, CUC has to meet obligations totaling \$3.8 million that are due by the end of next week.

This includes a \$2.86 million payment to Mobil for production fuel, about \$600,000 for the personnel's salary and overtime pay for work done following Supertyphoon Chaba, and \$340,000 for other miscellaneous expenses.

Samari, however, informed the CUC board of directors of different possible sources of revenue that can help the corporation meet its commitments.

On top of this is the \$650,000 payment due from the CNMI government on Sept. 15. Samari also expressed confidence that CUC will be able to raise at least \$1 million out of the remaining \$1.8 million shortfall from collections from customers. He noted that CUC's collection averages \$275,000 daily.

The corporation could encash its certificates of deposit to cover the balance.

See **CUC** on Page 12



SHAN SEMAN

DISABILITY ADVOCATES

Participants in yesterday's Special Education State Advisory Panel meeting at the Pacific Gardenia Hotel discuss important matters dealing with children with disabilities in the Commonwealth. The panel may make recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding students with disabilities. (See story on page 12)

Room rates lagging behind occupancy rates

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

August was a good month for the hotel industry, with the average occupancy rate reaching almost 75 percent.

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands reported that hotel occupancy rates averaged 74.66 percent last month—a significant increase from the 63.39-percent average rate in August 2003.

Hotel room rates, however, dropped by almost 16 percent in August when compared with the same month last year. While posting the highest room rate so far this year, last month registered the lowest figure for the month of August since 1992.

HANMI chair Ronald Sablan attributed the increase to additional flights introduced by the airlines, the improving Japanese economy, and the exodus of typhoon victims to the hotels.

"There were more affordable travel packages to the CNMI over the past month. Also, as we said earlier, a lot of local residents sought temporary shelter in the hotels during the typhoon," Sablan said.

He also noted that the Japan economy has been slowly improving.

"We have to give credit to all the players of the tourism industry who have pulled together during these tough times," he said.

See **ROOM** on Page 12

'Not all GOPs want Babauta for 2005'

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Despite Gov. Juan N. Babauta's public declaration that he and Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente would seek reelection in next year's polls, some of his partymates are pushing for a primary election to determine who the Republican Party's standard bearers should be.

"Not everyone in the party wants

See **NOT** on Page 12

Local

diabetes
+green

world resort

camacho

cb cruz

cars unlimited

hardt

mcdo

COMMUNITY Briefs

Interpreters needed

The Emergency Operations Center is seeking volunteer interpreters to assist individuals seeking typhoon assistance at the Disaster Recovery Centers. Interpreters for Chinese, Korean, Tagalog and Japanese are needed. Hours are flexible. To volunteer, call Juan T. Camacho at the Emergency Management Office at 322-8001/2.

Palau presidential candidate on-island tomorrow

Palau presidential candidate Polycrap Basilius will be on Saipan on Saturday, Sept. 11, 2004, to meet with all Palauans living in the CNMI. A meeting is scheduled for that evening from 6pm to 10pm at the Pacific Gardenia. Everyone is invited.

Palau's presidential primary election is scheduled for Sept. 28, 2004 with the general election set for Nov. 2, 2004.

Attention bartenders, waitstaff!

The "Chivas Regal Whisky," in cooperation with the Northern Mariana Bartender Association, will be conducting a training/seminar at Aqua Resort Club on Sept. 14, 2004, Tuesday, between 10:30am to 1:30pm. The organizers are inviting bartenders and waitstaff to join this activity, with Brand Ambassador Robin Johnston, Regional Director Chivas Brothers, as guest speaker.

This seminar is free of charge, with a complimentary lunch. For inquiries and reservations contact 286-9982.

Koblerville Open House today

Acting principal Eric DLG. Evangelista of Koblerville Elementary School would like to inform the community of upcoming events at Koblerville Elementary.

- Open House to be held today, Sept. 10, at KES from 2:45pm to 4:30pm. All parents are encouraged to come.
- Mid-term progress reports will be distributed on Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2004.

To all WSR parents, guardians

Events to remember for Sept. 2004 at the William S. Reyes Elementary School:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Sept. 13 | WSR STUCO Campaign begins |
| Sept. 14 | PTSA meeting at 6pm in the cafeteria |
| Sept. 16 | Principal's meeting |
| Sept. 20 | CNMI Disaster Preparedness Week begins |
| | WSR Accreditation Leadership Team Meeting |
| Sept. 21 | 1st WSR Spelling Bee Competition |
| Sept. 22 | PeaceBuilders® Diner's Club |
| Sept. 28 | WSR STUCO Election |
| Sept. 29 | Final examinations begin |

One of the major events for the month of September is the Annual WSR STUCO (Student Council) Election. WSR will hold its STUCO election for school year 2004-2005 on Sept. 28. All students from 3rd to 6th grade will choose their leaders on that day. The official candidates will be presented to the student body on Sept. 13 during the flag ceremony, followed by a weeklong campaign period, followed by the STUCO election on Sept. 28. The STUCO officers will then be sworn in to office by the Judge Alex Castro of the Supreme Court at an induction ceremony on Oct. 4.

For more information, contact the school at 664-3971 or 664-3976.

September events at GES

Cultural Heritage Month ends with Cultural Day at the Garapan Elementary School. If parents would like to prepare booths or presentations, call GES at 664-3955.

- Sept. 10, 2004, is the deadline for Free Meal Applications;
- Sept. 10, 2004-GES will be having a special flag ceremony in remembrance of 9/11. "We will wear patriotic colors."
- Sept. 15, 2004 is Pizza Hut Night. Proceeds will help fund this year's handbook for parents/students.
- The week of Sept. 20, 2004 will be school picture week.
- Sept. 30, 2004 is PTA Night at 6pm in the school cafeteria.

More information regarding these activities will be disseminated as the month progresses, the school said in a statement.

The school also extended its gratitude to 99 Cent Supermarket, which donated rakes to teachers for the campus clean up after Super typhoon Chaba, and to the Saipan Mayor's Office for property disposing of debris from the typhoon.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2004											
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS						
Domestic Flights					Domestic Flights						
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nikko

cosmos box
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+blue/pink

Pacific Trading loses \$36K in burglary

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

Authorities are currently investigating a burglary and theft incident that resulted in the Pacific Trading Co. losing thousands of dollars in cash and checks.

PTC later revealed that the suspect(s) managed to get away with approximately \$36,000 due to the incident.

According to NMI Crime Stoppers, patrol officers were dispatched to the establishment early Monday morning after receiving a report that it had been burglarized. The report was placed at about 6:58am.

“The operational manager of [PTC] called [the Department

of Public Safety] and reported a burglary and theft incident. Patrol officers arrived at the scene and later learned that the office assigned to the general manager was burglarized,” said Crime Stoppers detective Eric David.

Police have yet to identify how many suspects were involved in the incident.

David indicated that investigation conducted by the responding officers revealed that the suspect(s) entered the establishment through the rooftop by cutting the roof open.

“They [suspects] made their way to the general manager’s office from the ceiling, passing through the alarm systems,” he said.

David said the suspect(s) then broke into the safe room and managed to gain entry to one of the safes.

The incident has been tagged as the Crime Stoppers’ Crime of the Week for Sept. 6-10.

Anyone with information about the crime, or any other crime, is urged to call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272, or the Criminal Investigation Bureau TASC office at 664-9045/42.

The NMI Crime Stoppers, which was established in 1989, has been helping the police department solve cases through unique information-gathering techniques that reward tipsters. The past year

has been a banner year for the NMI Crime Stoppers.

It received tips through its hotline, which led to arrests for crimes ranging from burglary to robbery, and even murder.

As of March of this year, the NMI Crime Stoppers cleared a total of 196 cases and made a total of 159 arrests. The group also paid out over \$8,300 in cash rewards and recovered some \$197,793 in stolen properties. Through its efforts, the anti-crime group also helped in the recovery of \$2.4 million worth of narcotics.

Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 for information leading to an arrest. Caller ID is not used and all calls remain anonymous.

Worker found engaging in unauthorized labor

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Division of Labor has declined to grant an alien worker the opportunity to look for a new employer after he was found engaging in unauthorized work in the Commonwealth.

Hearing officer Jerry Cody gave worker Zhang Xue Zhe until Sept. 15 to leave the CNMI. Zhang was warned that failure to do so may result in his possible deportation.

Zhang was formerly employed as a mason by SSK Enterprise Inc. On Feb. 11, 2003, Koram International filed a transfer application to employ Zhang as a maintenance worker for its “One Mart” grocery store in Chalan Laulau.

In March 2003, Koram closed its “One Mart” store, based on its inability to pay rent to its sublessor. During the following several months, Koram’s vice president attempted to resolve the dispute with the landlord with no success. The store never re-opened.

On June 9, 2003, the Labor Department issued a deficiency notice, noting that the application required an additional salary bond and an updated business establishment inspection.

Labor never received any corrective documents from the employer, prompting the department to deny the application on Oct. 9, 2003.

About a month later, a Koram official wrote a letter informing Labor that the busi-

ness had closed due to financial problems.

For his part, Zhang did not approach the department between March 2003—when the store closed—and July 2004.

At the hearing of the appeal, he admitted that he worked at Koram’s One Mart store in February, until it closed the following month. From March 2003 until the present, Zhang resided in an apartment building owned by his former employer, SSK Enterprise, and served as the building’s maintenance worker or caretaker, though it was not clear whether he was paid wages, or compensated free lodging for the arrangement.

Also at the hearing, neither Koram nor Zhang contested the denial. Rather, Zhang simply asked to be allowed to transfer to another employer.

Cody, however, denied Zhang’s request.

“The hearing officer routinely consider requests for transfer relief from non-resident workers whose transfer applications are denied through no fault of their own, provided that an appeal of the notice of denial is filed in a timely manner,” Cody said. “In this case, the employer appealed the denial in a timely manner, but the employee’s failure to cooperate led to a significant delay in resolving this case,”

Cody also told Koram International to take prompt steps to inform the Labor director if the employer closes its business and no longer intends to employ a nonresident employee.

POWER to hold disco fundraiser for *man’amko*

Non-profit organization P.O.W.E.R., under the leadership of Corie Borja, announced yesterday that it would hold a Disco Night fundraiser this Saturday, Sept. 11, at the Garapan Central Park.

The event will unfold at 6pm and run through to 2am Sunday morning, and is open to the general public.

According to the organization, the intention of the event is to raise funds for the CNMI’s elderly, or the *man’amko*.

“At first, it was planned that 20 percent of the profit would be given to the *man’amko*, but after a group meeting [Wednesday night], everyone decided that 100 percent of the net profit would be given to them,” the group said.

The group also indicated that Office of Aging director

Joe Palacios, as well as the *man’amko*, would be on hand and take part in the occasion.

The event would feature live band and entertainment, as well as food and drinks.

Tickets are to be sold at the door at a rate of \$10 per person.

P.O.W.E.R., which has been involved in several community cleanups associated with the United Filipino Organization or the Environmental Interagency Cleanup Operation Team, indicated that it was approached by EICOT chairman Benny Pangelinan regarding the event.

Pangelinan reportedly saw the *man’amko* fundraising through a car wash. He approached the group and presented the idea of hosting a fundraiser, the proceeds of which would benefit the *man’amko*. *(Shan Seman)*

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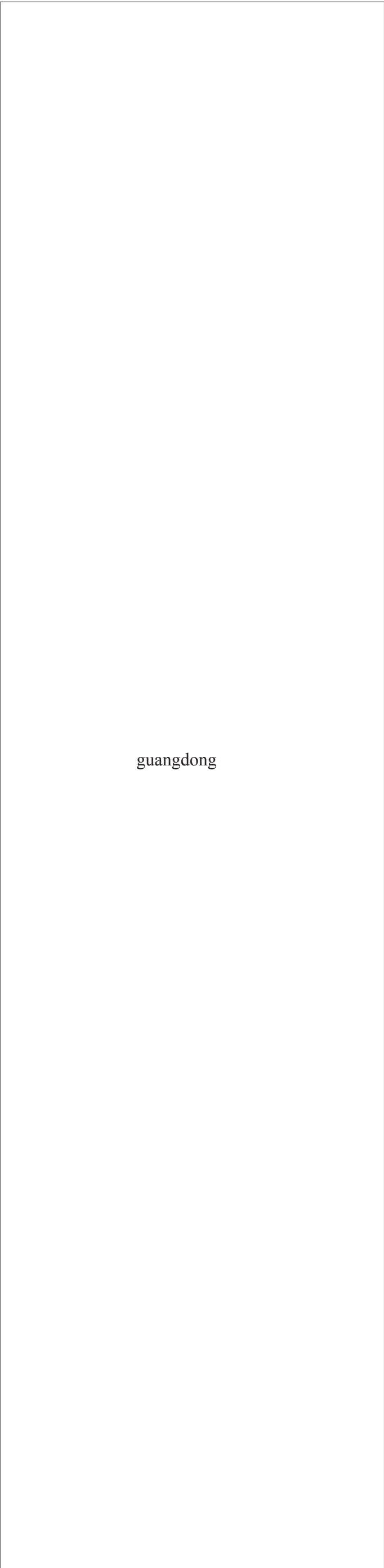
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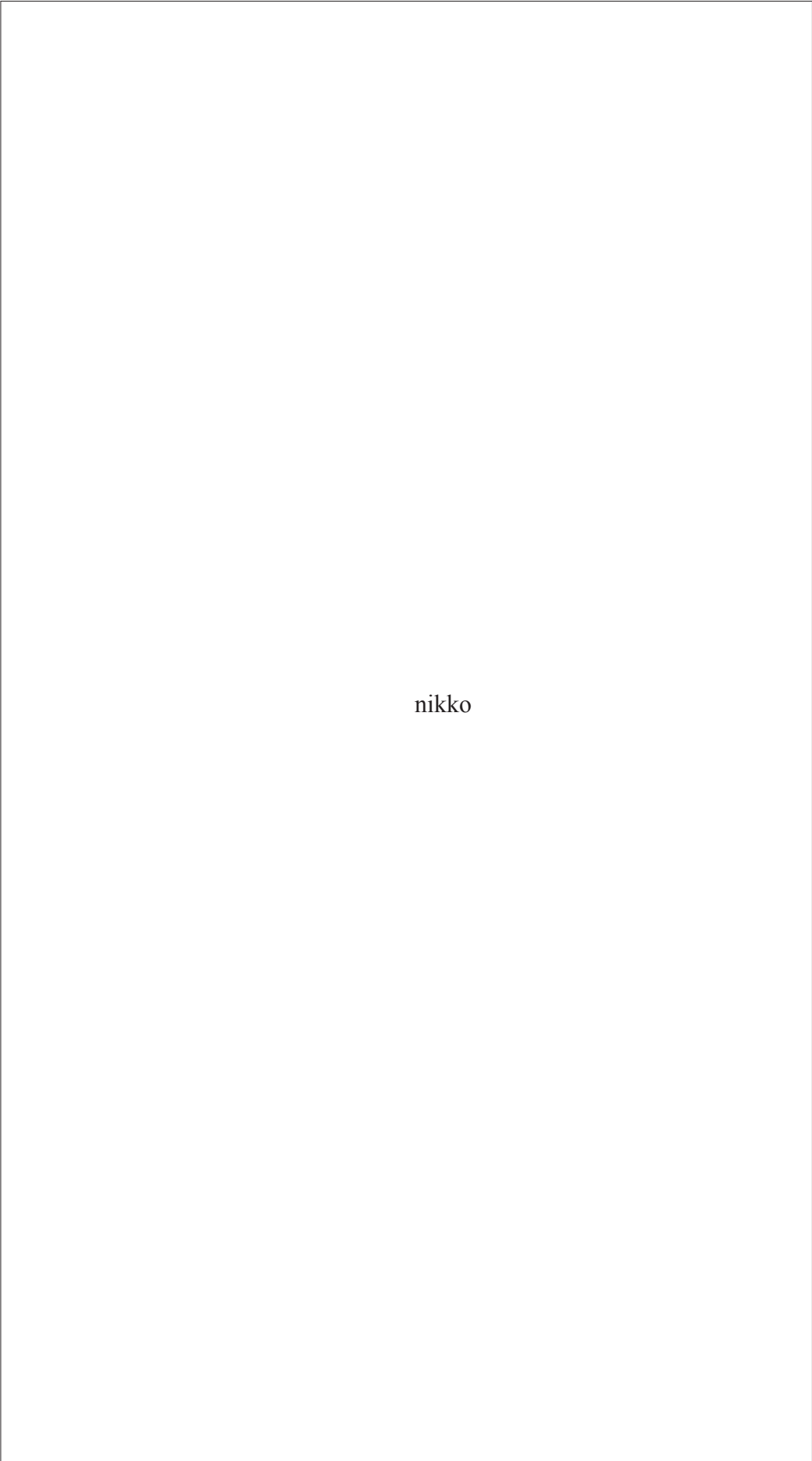
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nikko

US Navy spends \$1.2 million on Guam gate

HAGATNA, Guam (PDN, PIR)—After more than a month under construction, Navy officials reopened a new main gate yesterday complete with bulletproof glass, security cameras and a concrete structure designed to withstand winds up to 175 mph.

Dozens of people, including security officers responsible for the front gate, attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony held to mark the completion of the \$1.2 million project. At 8 a.m. yesterday, a steady stream of vehicles began entering the front gate—the first one being Capt. Robert McNaught, commanding officer of the U.S. Naval Forces Marianas Support Activity, in his gold-colored sport utility vehicle.

“I think we got a pretty good value for \$1.2 million,” said McNaught as he looked toward the sides of the base that are shaped as latte stones. “As you approach it, there is no mistaking that you are entering a Naval Base. It reflects the cultural aspect of Guam. I think it is quite beautiful.”

The gate is complete with bullet-proof glass, several long-range video cameras, and a guard house with a restroom.

“We’ll have cameras that will be able to read the license plate even with the headlights on,” said Cmdr. Tito Arandela, a Navy security officer. “So anybody who runs the gate illegally, we will have a record of it.”

Its structure also allows for pedestrians to walk up to the sides of the gate, swipe their ID cards and enter through a metal gate.

“The old gate was OK. It was functional,” McNaught said. The former gate, however, did not have cover for those assigned to it, which exposed

them to wind, rain and the hot sun.

“This is a much-improved gate from what we had before. What we had before was ex-

posed to the terrain and the elements and it was not really good for the security people that were providing security out here,” said Senior Chief Petty Officer

Jonathan Annis, deputy public affairs officer for the Navy.

Annis said the improvements to the base’s gate were partially prompted by the terrorist attacks

on Sept. 11, 2001. McNaught said the need to have a high-tech gate was greater because of “the world that we live in and the uncertainty.”

“What it does for the security people is, it certainly makes our job easier. It is definitely more

comfortable with a roof over their head,” Arandela said.

“But with state-of-the-art electronics and detection equipment we are now able to detect any type of penetration and have an electronic record of vehicles that go through our gates.”

Cuban doctors answer Nauru call for help

MELBOURNE, Australia (Radio Australia, PIR)—Nauru’s health minister says the arrival two months ago of 11 Cuban doctors has made a major contribution to improving the country’s ability to handle its serious health problems.

The Cuban government sent them to Nauru after a request to Cuba’s president, Fidel Castro.

Nauru’s health minister, Kieren Keke, who used to spend half his day at the hospital and the other half in his ministerial office, says the doctors’ arrival has taken pressure off him.

“That has certainly changed my workload and, I think, the workload of the other local doctors,” he said. “We were down to three doctors trying to serve a population of over 10,000, so the doctors have been received with a lot of thanks.”

There have been a few language problems with not many people on Nauru speaking Spanish but Dr Keke says communication is gradually improving.

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+red

Opinion

CNM'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 247

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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Remember Afghanistan?

As politicians squabble, poverty grows

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Free is popular

By ED STEPHENS

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"Ed4Saipan@yahoo.com"*



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Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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CDA cleared in funds requisition

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Commonwealth Development Authority board chair Sixto Igisomar said the agency has been "cleared from any wrongdoing" by the U.S.-based bond company on funds requisition for land compensation in the CNMI.

Igisomar cited that in an Aug. 9, 2004 opinion, bond counsel Roger Davis of the San Francisco law firm Orrick, Herrington, and Sutcliffe said that the Marianas Public Lands Authority should not be requisitioning any money from the bond trustee until the land claimant has accepted the offer.

In other words, Igisomar said that if the land claimant does not accept the offer tendered by MPLA, then no money should be requisitioned from the trustee until the matter is resolved and the claimant has accepted the package.

If there is complete certainty and no further changes in amounts required, then and only then should MPLA requisition from the trustee, he said.

The trustee then cuts the check directly to the land claimant.

Igisomar said that, if the procedure had been followed, then it would have not been necessary for CDA to reduce the amount of the MPLA requisition by the same amount that MPLA still held in its

bank account because the claimants had not accepted the offer made to them.

"CDA's action in instructing the trustee to reduce the amount to be disbursed to MPLA was a reasonable step in avoiding further unauthorized disbursements to MPLA by the trustee," said Igisomar.

The requisition issue has resulted in the suspension of MPLA commissioner Henry Hofschneider by the MPLA board for alleged insubordination.

The board chair cited that Hofschneider had allowed CDA to alter the amount of funds being transferred from \$216,322 to \$134,695.91 without consent by the board.

New Caledonia hopes to rekindle tourism

NOUMEA, (Oceania Flash, PIR)—Tourism stakeholders in New Caledonia are planning to hold a roundtable in November in a bid to salvage the Pacific territory as an attractive destination.

Last year, just above 100,000 visitors chose New Caledonia as their holiday destination.

Christiane Gambay, who used to head the Destination Loyalty Islands concern, was last month appointed "Destination Nouvelle-Calédonie" head.

She told local media that one of the keys to putting the industry back on track was to implement a common destination approach.

Until last year, New Caledonia was promoting itself under three different banners, one for each of the three provinces: North, South and Loyalty Islands.

Gambay said from now on, New Caledonia must "speak with one voice" on the regional and international front.

"We will now work on all existing problems, and try to iron them out, whether it regards air links, hotel capacity or service provided to the visitors," she said.

Foreign tourists visiting New Caledonia often complain about high prices and more generally, about the lack of service, recent surveys showed.

"The tourism sector is in a difficult phase. And according to provisions, another 1,300 hotel rooms should become available shortly. This is a fifty per cent increase of the hotel capacity. And these rooms now have to be filled with customers." The November seminar is expected to come up with a new strategy and an action plan to boost New Caledonia as a destination as early as next month.

Concerned stakeholders have recently formed a group to voice their concern.

Their spokesman, Michel Doppler,

said the current state of New Caledonia's tourism industry had not show any improvement for the past twenty years.

"As opposed to all the other Pacific destinations, in New Caledonia, for the past twenty years, the number of visitors has hardly increased: there were 94,000 in 1984 and last year 102,000," he said.

"And in order for our hotel industry to function properly, it is generally acknowledged that there should be at least fifteen thousand visitors per year. And with the anticipated increase in hotel capacity for next year, we would really need sixty to eighty thousand more visitors. Practically, this means we should reach the two hundred thousand mark before 2007."

Last year, hotels around the French Pacific territory have had to terminate some 89 staff.

Altogether, New Caledonia's tourism industry employs about 3,300 staff.

ENDANGERED

From Page 1

cies was declining and, in 1982, with 10,763 birds left in the wild, identified the white-eye as a candidate for listing. The species continued to decline unprotected for over two decades until Earthjustice and the Center secured a series of court orders forcing the Bush administration finally to list it as an endangered species in January 2004. By this time, the wild population had declined to just 1,092 birds.

Earthjustice said that in the final listing rule, the administration identified habitat loss and degradation as primary causes of the species' dramatic

decline, yet refused to designate critical habitat. On May 20, 2004, Earthjustice, representing the Center for Biological Diversity, filed suit against the Bush administration to force it to obey the law.

"This case vividly illustrates Congress's wisdom when it empowered citizens to sue the Service for failing to comply with the Endangered Species Act," said Earthjustice attorney David Henkin, who represented the Center. "Even though the Service knew that its refusal to protect the white-eye's essential recovery habitat was illegal, it would have gotten away with it, had concerned citizens not stepped forward to uphold the law."

Hofschneider, the House of Representatives' minority leader, also said a primary election would be appropriate to determine the Republican Party's official gubernatorial candidate next year. "It's good for the electorate to have choices," said Hofschneider, another Republican.

Earlier reports have it that Hofschneider wants to run for governor in next year's elections.

When asked, however, if he would challenge Babauta's bid to become the Republican Party's gubernatorial candidate in 2005, Hofschneider merely said he would reserve his

"Critical habitat" consists of those areas that must be managed to ensure the species recovers. Federal agencies may not carry out, fund, or approve any actions that destroy or adversely modify critical habitat. Since the restrictions are directed solely at federal agencies, designation generally has little direct effect on private landowners. However, critical habitat also performs an important educational role, informing the public and local governments about areas essential to species recovery.

Data submitted to Congress by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service show that species with critical habitat are twice as like to be improving as species without it.

comments for a later time.

Babauta's public announcement of his intent to seek reelection came days after the national Republican Party gave recognition to the local party.

Majority of the members of the U.S. GOP's national rules committee voted in favor of the CNMI Republican Party's recognition, amid lobbying efforts by Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio.

With the recognition, the CNMI Republican Party expects to gain an advantage in next year's Commonwealth elections. The local party may also seek support from the national party and its members.

NCSEAM to hold orientation on focus monitoring for SPED

By **SHAN SEMAN**
REPORTER

The National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring recently indicated that it would hold a focus monitoring orientation for a group representing the Public School System next month.

Focus monitoring, as defined by the NCSEAM, is "a process that purposefully selects priority areas to examine for compliance while not specifically examining other areas for compliance to maximize resources, emphasize important variables, and increase the probability of improved results."

The orientation, which was announced yesterday by Nieves Flores of the University of Guam during the Special Education State Advisory Panel meeting at the Pacific Gardenia Hotel, is scheduled to take place on Oct. 15-19.

Flores, who facilitated the meeting, said the orientation is intended for "a select group of individuals making up a core team from the PSS."

"The whole purpose is to provide basic information in focus monitoring," she said of the orientation.

Federally funded by the Office of Special Education Programs under the U.S. Department of Education, the NCSEAM is responsible for assisting states, local agencies, as well as the OSEP in implementing focus monitoring and "evidence-based decision-making" on complying with federal law through work plans based on self-assessment and continuous progress evaluation.

Meanwhile, the Special Education

State Advisory Panel's meeting was intended mainly to elect officers; however, a quorum was not in place, resulting in the process being put on hold. The panel is a required for all jurisdictions by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

According to NMI special education coordinator Joanne Nicholls, 51 percent of the attendees must be parents of children with disabilities for a quorum to be met.

"It's very hard to bring it together because it must have a certain composition. It must be composed 51 percent of parents of children with disabilities in order to reach a quorum, which is one of the hardest things for us to here, especially since we're dealing with three islands [Saipan Rota, and Tinian.]

Nicholls indicated that the panel can help dictate or direct special education policy, as well as make recommendations to the State Board of Education about matters regarding children with disabilities in both public and private schools.

The panel is also required to conduct meetings and advise the PSS upon unmet needs related to students with all types of disabilities.

In addition, the Nicholls said the panel also works on attaining grants for programs in the Commonwealth.

Flores, for her part, had the role of providing technical assistance as part of a subcontract that the UOG receives through the Western Regional Resources Center out of University of Oregon.

"This is part of my responsibility...to help them set up their advisory panel," she said.

CUC

From Page 1

"Another scenario is if the government does not make a payment by Sept. 15," Samari said. CUC will then have to rely on the \$1 million projected collection from customers and on the cash from the CDs.

He said that CUC's certificates of deposit currently amount to \$7.8 million. However, \$2.8 million of this has already been allotted for some expenses, leaving CUC only \$5 million available for its operational expenses.

The \$650,000 payment from govern-

ment comes pursuant to its agreement with CUC, following a court order stopping CUC from disconnecting utility services to the government. As of July 31, the government owed CUC \$17.9 million.

At yesterday's board meeting, CUC legal counsel Kay Delafield said the corporation can bring the government to court for breach of agreement if it fails to make a payment next week.

Samari also reported that 10 major accounts have been identified for collection. He said letters will be sent to these delinquent customers to force them to settle their accounts immediately.

ROOM

From Page 1

Sablan expressed confidence that the coming months will be favorable to the hotel industry. With that, he hopes that hotels may gradually bring room rates back to their level before the Iraq war and the SARS outbreak devastated the tourism industry last year. The aftermath of both events forced many to drop their room rates in order to come up with more attractive packages to guests.

Last August, room rates averaged only \$91.95—a 15.93 percent decline from the \$109.37 room rate in August 2003.

The previous low for the month of August was recorded in 2002, when room rates reached only \$107.46. This

came as a result of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

"When arrivals and occupancy rates rise, the room rates also usually rise. This did not happen last month because many hotels had reduced room rates. Once you do that, you can't just adjust the rates as soon as things start to look good. It has to be done gradually," Sablan said.

HANMI statistics represents over 2,500 rooms in 14 Saipan hotels—Hotel Regency Saipan, Hotel Nikko Saipan, Dai-Ichi Hotel, Pacific Islands Club, World Resort Saipan, Saipan Grand Hotel, Marianas Resort Hotel, Aqua Resort Club, Aquarius Beach Tower, Coral Ocean Point, Century Hotel, Chalan Kanoa Beach Club, Saipan Ocean View Hotel, and Pacific Gardenia Hotel.

Island Snapshots

The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed pictures of birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details (a description of the event, identities of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place), the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the size of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to editor.tribune@gtcpacific.net. To check if contributions are received, call 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747.

pexst

hot city

cda world resort

jama

Letters to the Editor

To the Honorable Mayor

Enough is enough. After paying for the rental of two backhoe services last year and three backhoe services for this year, I am now more than furious.

Haiguas Lane. Almost all the local residents of Haiguas Lane have called your office for assistance but you completely ignored us. Ever since Typhoon Tingting up until Typhoon Chaba, and a dozen of rainstorms in between, you still refused to send us a road grader or front loader to ease the lumps and bumps on our road. In addition, I am sure that you have given the same treatment to those who are on your “low list.” For your information, there are more than 30 families on that street, if you count even our poor non-resident workers.

The road condition is so bad that my wife had a flat tire even after replacing her old tires. A neighbor with two small children had a flat tire on her way to drop her kids to school, a Toyota Tacoma truck had to be pulled out because its rear axle was caught in a ditch and a powerful 4x4 Toyota truck was stuck in the middle of the road and had to be assisted by neighbors.

My neighbors are very simple people who simply want their government to provide them a safe and drivable road—nothing more. They just want access to their children’s schools, shopping center, hospital, church, etc.

I had the privilege of visiting one of the good mayors and he introduced to me the “Maintained Roads of Saipan Map.” Mr. Mayor, take your request for Road Service Book and throw it in the Marianas Trench. Your job is to survey the maintained roads of Saipan yourself and fix them. You do not need a request. As to the question of funds, you now have two federal disaster declarations, what are you waiting for?

As for the cemetery and rosary parking, the last time I called your office, your good secretary informed me that there were “three deaths” on the island and all the equipment were busy working on the rosary parking. Moreover, for the last two November 1, the peoples’ heavy equipment and personnel were detailed at our Chalan Kanoa cemetery. Mr. Mayor, dead people need prayers, masses, rosaries and personal prayers, not municipality equipment and personnel—living people do.

You do not need to be a NASA astronaut to know that you are targeting high-impact potential voters by placing yourself and your services at places where people are very vulnerable due to their grief. Shame on you!

You project yourself as a devout Catholic, but isn’t this ironic when you consider that the road of the highest figure of our church and his neighbors is not only dangerous but also suicidal. Why? Only a few voters? Shame on you again.

It is an opportune time for you to realize that we are presently not living in the 60’s and 70’s when we mostly had Chamorro, Carolinians and 99 percent Catholics. We are presently a society of Protestants, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Muslims, Hindus, atheist, etc. Are we then obligated to do all their respective cemeteries and prayer parking? By the way, when was the last time you detailed your equipment men to the Capital Hill cemetery? None? Is it because their families do not vote and only a few of them do? Shame again, my friend.

Henry Kappon Sablan
Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

More action, less rhetoric

In response to the Sept. 6 “Letter To The Editor” from Ambrose Bennett, perhaps the governor-appointed BOE representative fosters arrogance by his own circumstances. Respect in this community is gained by a local track record of positive accomplishments and by the support of one’s peers, not by an edict from the governor. My experience with the members of the BOE is that

they are committed to improving education for our youngsters, but are busy people. Like all who are busy, they want assistance in finding simple, workable solutions and do not wish to waste time on rhetoric.

Roger Ludwick
Saipan

Babauta IS education governor

I’m not interested in politics but I am interested in education and the author of the letter about Governor Babauta not being an education governor couldn’t be farther from the truth if they were living on the North Pole. Governor Babauta has showed more interest in education than any governor in the past decade. His Education Initiative was the first of its kind in the CNMI and he would have been even more affective had our Board of Education not been so arrogant and had chosen to work with the governor rather than opposing his every attempt to help. The governor even offered money to Education that was refused by the Board.

I will be the first to say the governor has made some mistakes, but haven’t we all? But I’m also sure he has learned from his mistakes. But to accuse him about the problems after the typhoon is ridiculous, especially with the appearance of a pre-election smear campaign. They could have

at least waited until the right time for that kind of political mess.

The three typhoons caused the damage and the governor’s job was to get us relief and to make sure people had a place to stay. The delay at MHS was not the governor’s fault but the typhoons’. There are several government agencies that are responsible for taking care of the “storm refugees” and they did. We have always used schools for this purpose, so why the complaints now? The only logical answer that comes to mind given the wording of the mixed-up letter is that it was simply political smear tactics on the eve of the governor’s announcement to run for office again because Governor Babauta is certainly an education governor and the best we have had when it comes to education.

A concerned citizen

Editor’s Note: The author requested anonymity.

DEQ raises red flag on 13 NMI beach sites

The Division of Environmental Quality has raised the red flag on 11 beach sites on Saipan, plus one each on Tinian and Rota after samples collected from the sites were found to contain excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria. Managaha Island was given a green flag.

In its latest Marine Water Quality report for the week, the 11 Saipan beach sites that were designated red flag zones are Wing Beach, Pau-Pau Beach, Nikko Hotel Beach, DPW Channel Bridge, Micro Beach, Samoa Housing Beach, Hafa-Adai Hotel Beach, Drainage #2, Garapan Fishing Dock, Garapan Beach, and the San Antonio Lift Station Beach. On

Tinian, the affected waters are those within the island’s harbor, while on Rota, the red flag zone covers the Guata Beach.

DEQ said that samples collected from these locations contained excessive concentrations of two fecal indicator bacteria—fecal coliform and enterococci—that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

However, studies have also shown that storm water runoff in tropical environments may also contain these bacteria from the natural environment, which may not be directly associated with public health concerns.

“Therefore, in order to ad-

equately address public health concerns, DEQ has given [these] locations a red flag and advises the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified,” the agency said.

Meanwhile, the agency has given the Managaha Island a green flag after samples collected showed no excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria. “Therefore, DEQ assigns all of the sampled beach sites a green flag. Enjoy our waters.”

DEQ analyzes samples of marine recreational and storm drainage water from 37 locations on Saipan’s Coast. On Tinian, it collected samples from 10 locations, while on

Rota, it obtained samples from 12 sites. The agency analyzed a total of 11 samples from the shore surrounding Managaha.

DEQ welcomes all inquiries as to the quality of the beach

Mificpa seminar workshop on Sept. 18

The competitive edge of a business enterprise in the globalized world depends on its ability to forge a creative partnership with government and non-government institutions.

To help facilitate a healthy climate for exchange of information and synergy, the Marianas Institute Filipino CPAs and Accountants or Mificpa is sponsoring a special seminar workshop.

Dubbed “The Management, the Accountant and the Government—a Partnership for Profit and Stability,” the seminar

workshop is open to accountants, managers, and other members of the business workforce.

It will be held on Sept. 18, 7:30am to 4pm at the Rey Lounge, Aqua Resort Club in Achugao. Registration fee is \$20, which is inclusive of materials, lunch, and refreshments in the morning and afternoon.

Relevant topics that will be presented for discussion include the following:

- Business Opportunities in the CNMI;
- Current Problems of the Business Community;
- Alternatives to the Garment Industry;
- Second Job for Alien Workers;
- Financial, Management Accounting and Statistical Reports;
- Impact of Information Technology in Business Operation; and
- Possibility of Saipan as a Venue for CPA Examinations.

Invited speakers are of high-caliber, known experts in their own fields, and have proven their solidarity with the

water. The public is encouraged to contact DEQ at 664-8500 with any questions.

concerns of Oversea Foreign Workers. They include Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Alex Sablan and Saipan Rep. Heinz Hofschneider.

Aside from its intended service for Filipinos in the business community, the seminar workshop is also organized to mark the 10th year anniversary of Mificpa, the only organization of OFWs that has a worldwide scope. Many of its members have successfully passed the U.S. CPA board examination. This year’s anniversary bears the theme “Ten Years of Enhancing Growth and Development.”

Mificpa steadfastly affirms its belief that the Filipino accountants, considered to be the best in the industry, perform a vital role in forging creative partnerships among the business community, government, and non-government institutions of the CNMI.

For inquiries and reservations, please contact Lanie Matillano at 235-8641 or 287-4201 or any past and present officers of Mificpa.

DPS sobriety/DUI checkpoints today

The Department of Public Safety Traffic Section said it would hold several sobriety/driving under the influence checkpoints today, Sept. 10.

The first checkpoint will take place along Beach Road Chalan Lau Lau by Chars Mart. It is scheduled to begin at approximately 7pm and conclude at 8:15pm.

The second setup will be on 2W Chalan Lau Lau by Verizon. It is scheduled to begin at about 10pm and will be terminated at 11:15pm.

Both checkpoints will be terminated if it starts to rain.

“This activity is part of the [DPS] efforts to deter and detect violators of the CNMI Traffic Laws and to ensure that all vehicle occupants and the general public on the highways are protected,” the Traffic Section said. “In addition, the Traffic officers will be performing aggressive driver interdiction and laser activities.”

For more information, contact Sgt. Joseph A. Flores at 664-9084/5. *(Shan Seman)*

Tiny Wallis and Futuna plans airline

MATA’UTU, Wallis and Futuna (Oceania Flash, PIR)—France’s tiniest Pacific territory, Wallis and Futuna, is reported to have formed its very own airline, “Air Wallis,” with plans to launch its inaugural flight in January 2005, between Wallis and New Caledonia.

Management told RFO-Wallis there were also plans to establish routes to French Polynesia later next year.

Atolomako Puluiuvea, a Wallis islander who claims to represent one of the Kings of Wallis, Lavelua Tomasi Kulimoetoke, says the new company is a joint venture between the territory of Wallis and Futuna, traditional chiefs, the King, a local bank and private investors.

Plans are, for the first three years of operation, to lease a 126-seat Boeing 737 that is currently being operated by Air Vanuatu.

Meanwhile, the promoters say they plan to request French ministry of transport the operating green light for two flights a week between Wallis and Port Vila (Vanuatu), Nadi (Fiji) and Nouméa (New Caledonia).

The only company currently operating between Wallis and New Caledonia is Air Calédonie International (AirCalin).

Puluiuvea says the introduction of a second company would help bring down the price of tickets, compared to the current monopolistic situation.

There is also a potentially lucrative market on the Wallis-New Caledonia route, since over twenty thousand Wallisians (more than the population of Wallis) permanently live in New Caledonia and still maintain strong family and tradition links with their home island.

ctsi

Business

Greenspan: Economy regained some traction

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP ECONOMICS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan told Congress on Wednesday that the economy has “regained some traction” after a lull in late spring, reinforcing expectations of higher interest rates during the final stretch of the presidential campaign.

Greenspan said the economic pickup follows a “soft patch” caused in large part by soaring energy prices.

“The most recent data suggest that, on the whole, the expansion has regained some traction,” said the Fed chief, who offered his latest thoughts on the economy in an appearance before the House Budget Committee.

The modestly upbeat assessment two months before Election Day comes as President Bush and Democratic John Kerry clash over the economy and jobs.

A Federal Reserve survey of the economic climate said activity expanded in July and August. Many Fed regions reported modest growth. The St. Louis region, however, said business conditions were improving slowly; San Francisco reported solid gains.

Consumer spending, the lifeblood of the economy, showed mixed results across the Fed’s 12 regions.



AP
Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan testifies on the economy before the House Budget Committee, Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2004 on Capitol Hill.

Economists viewed Greenspan’s comments and the latest Fed survey as signs of a third rise this year in short-term interest rates when Fed policy-makers next meet, on Sept. 21.

Economists expect the Fed to increase a key rate to 1.75 percent from the current 1.50 percent.

“The indications are that we are emerging from a soft spot and that Greenspan is giving a green light to another interest rate increase,” said Ken Mayland, president of ClearView Economics.

Incumbent politicians normally are unhappy if the Fed raises interest rates close to an election.

But this time, many private economists believe the Fed

probably is helping Bush’s campaign by signaling an intention to keep lifting rates. Such an approach supports the administration’s view that the economy has begun to emerge from the recent slowdown, they said.

On Wall Street, investors, looking past Greenspan’s hopeful economic remarks, sent stocks lower. The Dow Jones industrials lost 29.43 points to close at 10,313.36.

Analysts say the economy, which grew at a 2.8 percent rate in the April-to-June quarter, picked up momentum in the July-to-September quarter. They estimate growth rates from 3 percent to just over 4 percent.

Job growth rebounded somewhat in August. Payrolls expanded by 144,000, the most since May. Still, there are 913,000 fewer jobs since Bush took office in January 2001.

Bush says his tax cuts have helped the economy rebound and that making them permanent will create more jobs. Kerry contends that Bush’s policies benefit the wealthy, squeeze the middle class, are not producing a significant number of jobs and have burdened the federal deficit.

The Congressional Budget Office is projecting a \$422 billion deficit this year. That is a record in dollar terms but an improvement from a January forecast for a larger, \$477 billion shortfall.

Greenspan said he believed the tax cuts were well-timed to help the economy bounce back from the 2001 recession. But he agreed the government could have taken other steps that might have provided an even bigger boost to growth. He did not elaborate.

Greenspan said he believed that were it not for surging oil prices this year, the United States would “still be seeing some very strong growth.” He refused to say precisely how the costlier oil had crimped economic activity.

The chairman did largely

blame rising energy prices for a big slowdown in consumer spending in the second quarter. Consumer spending bounced back in July after a weak June, Greenspan said. Early readings on retail sales in August have been mixed.

As he has done previously, Greenspan urged Congress to reinstate budget rules from the

1990s. They required that any tax cuts or increases in benefit programs such as Social Security be paid for either by higher taxes or spending cuts elsewhere.

He repeated a warning that Congress must act to address the long-term deficit problems before the retirement of the baby boom generation at the end of this decade.

Consumer borrowing jumps by 6.4 percent

WASHINGTON (AP)—Consumers stepped up their borrowing in July by the largest amount since the beginning of the year, the Federal Reserve reported Wednesday.

Consumer credit increased at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 6.4 percent in July, or by \$10.9 billion, from the previous month. That marked the biggest gain since January, when consumer borrowing surged at a 15.8 percent pace.

July’s increase pushed total consumer credit outstanding to a record \$2.04 trillion.

The Fed’s report includes credit card debt and loans for such things as boats, cars and mobile homes. It does not, however, include real-estate loans, such as home mortgages or popular home-equity loans.

The figures for July represented a big pickup in borrowing from June, when consumer credit increased at a 2.6 percent rate, or by \$4.3 billion.

“We knew there was an improvement in consumer spending in July, but the question is can we sustain that

momentum?” asked Carl Tanenbaum, chief economist at LaSalle Bank.

Early readings on retail sales in August have been mixed, he said. Economists watch consumers’ behavior closely because their spending accounts for roughly two-thirds of all economic activity in the United States.

Demand for revolving credit, such as credit cards, led the way in July. Such credit jumped at a rate of 9 percent, or \$5.6 billion, in July from the previous month. That compared with a 0.2 percent rate of decline in June, or a drop of \$117.9 million.

Demand for nonrevolving credit, which includes loans for cars, vacations and education, rose at a 5 percent rate in July, or \$5.3 billion. That followed a 4.1 percent growth rate in June, an increase of \$4.4 billion.

Retail sales rebounded in July after a dismal June. Car sales were helped out by incentives and other merchants discounted more to lure shoppers.

Brazil wins trade battles against US, EU

SAO PAULO, Brazil (AP)—Latin America’s agricultural giant scored two trade victories Wednesday against rich countries’ farm subsidies after the World Trade Organization agreed with Brazil that its farmers have been hurt by government assistance for U.S. cotton farmers and European Union sugar beet growers.

Brazilian officials and the development charity Oxfam International hailed the rulings by the 147-nation WTO as evidence that farm subsidies considered lavish by poor countries violate global trade rules and must be eliminated.

“This is about the whole way that rich countries support their domestic agriculture,” said Phil Bloomer of Oxfam’s fair trade campaign. “What we are seeing here is developing countries, led by Brazil, using the WTO to their own benefit. They are calling the big boys to account and forcing them to play by the rules.”

American officials vowed to appeal parts of the cotton decision within two months, and a spokesman for the European Union said it would decide

soon whether to appeal.

But Brazilian officials said they were encouraged with the outcome for South America’s largest country, the world’s biggest sugar exporter and fifth largest cotton exporter.

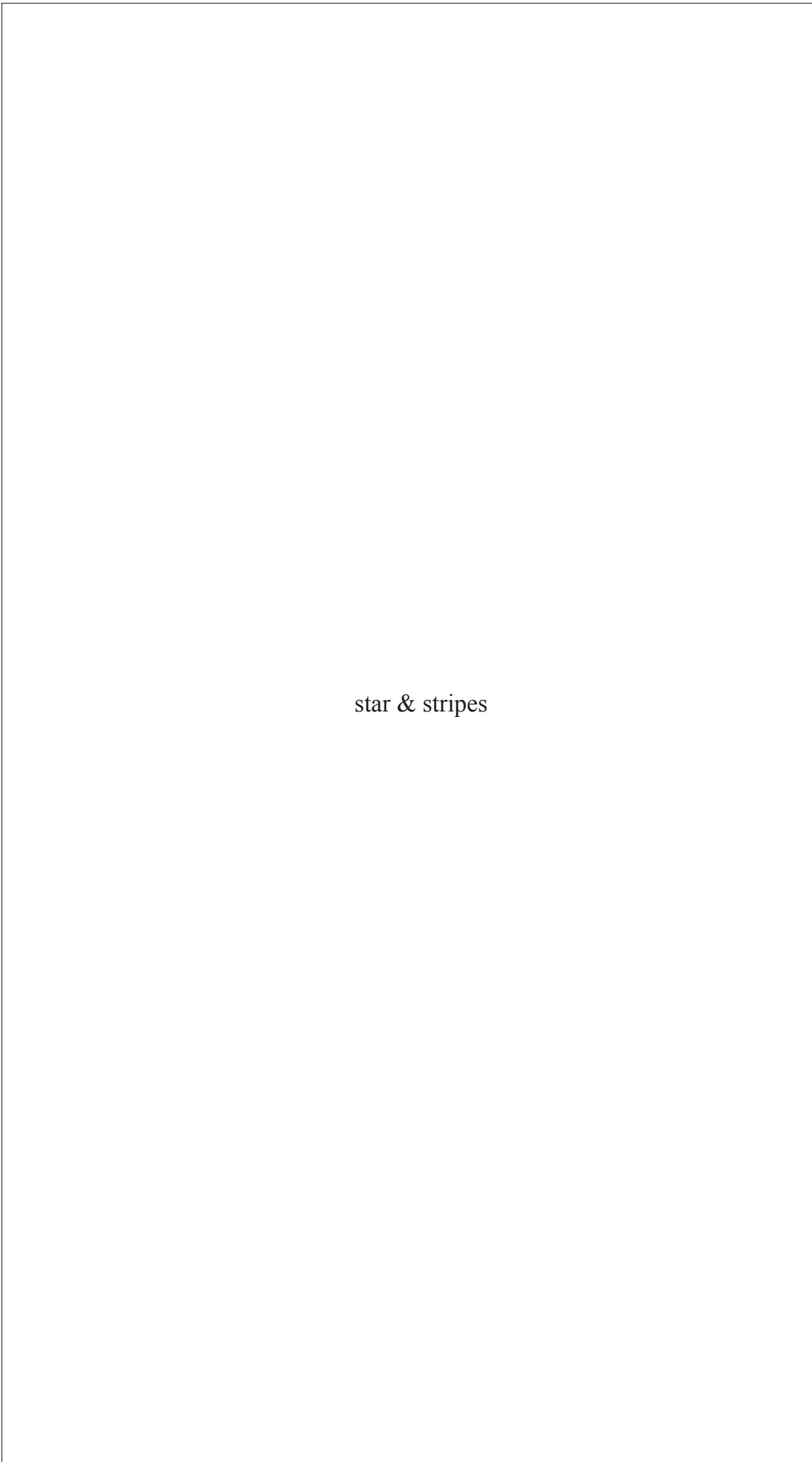
The sugar decision upheld a preliminary ruling issued by a WTO panel last month. The panel ruling on cotton was finalized in June, but details of the decision remained confidential until Wednesday.

“We were pleased before, but we are much more pleased now,” said Roberto Azevedo, a top trade official with Brazil’s Foreign Ministry.

Brazil alleged the United States has kept its place as the planet’s second-largest cotton grower and largest exporter because the U.S. government paid \$12.5 billion in subsidies to American farmers between August 1999 and July 2003.

The United States has insisted that its payments to farmers are within permitted levels, claiming many are not subsidies as defined by the WTO and should not be included in the calculations.

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VERIZON
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NMHC

Asia

shell back to school
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Asia

Powerful tropical storm pummels Japan

By KENJI HALL
AP WRITER

TOKYO (AP)—Japan’s coast guard on Wednesday found five more bodies from an Indonesian cargo ship that ran aground during a powerful typhoon that killed at least 32 people and injured hundreds.

The tropical storm, which was downgraded Wednesday from a typhoon after losing some of its devastating force, was centered at the northern tip of Hokkaido island and headed northwest with sustained winds of up to 67 mph.

As much as 8 inches of rain was forecast for Hokkaido and other areas of northern Japan through Wednesday evening, the Meteorological Agency said.

Typhoon Songda carved a path of destruction Tuesday along the country’s western coast, leaving about 1.6 million households without power, demolishing 27 homes and flooding 1,458 buildings, Japanese media said.

Officials advised 20,000 households to evacuate, Kyodo News reported.

Power was restored to many homes by Wednesday, although



Men inspect atop the sunken freighter after a powerful typhoon Songda that hit the southwestern parts of Japan in Hatsukaichi, Wednesday, Sept 8, 2004.

China cleans up from floods, 172 dead

BEIJING (AP)—China on Wednesday warned residents in a southwestern province Wednesday to brace for another round of storms after devastating floods and landslides killed at least 172 people.

Hundreds of thousands of people have been evacuated and more than 300,000 homes were damaged across the Sichuan and Chongqing regions, Xinhua said.

At least 97 died in Sichuan Province and 75 in Chongqing, a sprawling municipality to the east, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Sichuan’s disaster relief spokesman, He Rongjun, said another 10,000 people were sick or injured.

Even though the rains have stopped, meteorologists were forecasting at least three

more major storms in coming weeks, He said.

“We will not be moving any rescue workers from the front line so soon,” He said by telephone from the provincial capital, Chengdu.

More than 5,000 soldiers were taking part in the emergency efforts, and one 19-year-old recruit drowned while helping with evacuations, Xinhua said.

China Central Television showed residents jostling around empty plastic pails in Dazhou—the hardest-hit city in the province with 89 dead—as emergency workers filled the containers with fresh water from a giant hose.

Others were clearing streets filled with garbage, furniture and household items that were left after the water receded. Electricity has been restored in

the city, CCTV said, and people have been provided with accommodation and food.

In Chongqing, more than \$2.4 million has been raised through donations, CCTV said.

Some 200 medical workers were disinfecting Chongqing’s mountainous Kaixian county and 18 monitoring stations were being set up to guard against outbreaks of water-borne diseases, Xinhua said.

Summer rains wreak havoc across the flood-prone Yangtze practically every year, with torrents rushing down denuded slopes to menace low-lying plains in central China.

The floods are the deadliest natural disaster to strike the country this year. Last month, Typhoon Ranim and its aftermath killed 164 people in eastern China.

about 390,000 homes were still without electricity, authorities and utilities said.

The storm has killed at least 32 people, while 14 were missing, Kyodo News reported. Public broadcaster NHK said 948 people had been injured.

Typhoon Songda was the record seventh typhoon to hit Japan this year, exceeding the six storms that lashed the country in 1990, the Meteorological Agency said.

The discovery of the five dead sailors brought the death toll on the Indonesian ship to 11. The remainder of the 22-member crew of the Tri Ardianto were still missing, a spokesman for the 6th Regional Coast Guard Headquarters said on condition of anonymity.

The 6,300-ton vessel ran aground, broke in half and sank Tuesday as Typhoon Songda

pummeled southern Japan with powerful winds and high waves.

Stormy seas also sank a Cambodia-registered freighter, Blue Ocean, carrying 18 Russian crew in western Hatsukaichi harbor. Fourteen were rescued, but two died and two others were still missing, a Hiroshima Coast Guard Bureau spokesman said on condition of anonymity.

A man in his 60s was struck by a windblown tree branch early Wednesday and later died at a Sapporo city hospital, Hokkaido prefectural police spokesman Akihiro Ishikawa said. An elderly woman also died after being hit by flying debris.

Also in Hokkaido, a man in his 70s was reported missing after he left Hakodate port aboard a small boat but failed to return hours later.

NHK said Wednesday that hundreds of residents along

Japan’s western coast continued to wait out the storm at shelters.

In western Hiroshima prefecture, officials at Itsukushima shrine began extensive repairs to the 13th-century wooden complex. A spokeswoman for the shrine said part of the structure’s roof had been blown away and a large section that sits in the sea at high tide had been torn apart by strong waves.

NHK reported more than 100 flights were canceled nationwide, while most train and ferry operators in Hokkaido and other parts of northern Japan had halted services.

Authorities warned of possible landslides caused by a combination of heavy rains and aftershocks that followed weekend earthquakes in the western part of the country. Sunday’s tremors—magnitude 6.9 and 7.4—left 43 people injured.

Malaysian boy tests negative for bird flu

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysian authorities grappling with a bird flu outbreak promised to crack down on smugglers bringing poultry from Thailand, saying they were wrecking the country’s economy.

Meanwhile, tests came back negative for a 10-year-old boy who had been under hospital observation for bird flu from the village in northern Malaysia where the disease resurfaced this week.

Dr. Ramli Rahmad, director of disease control at the Health Ministry, said late Wednesday that the boy was expected to be discharged soon.

Malaysia has avoided any human cases of the deadly

H5N1 strain of avian influenza—which has killed at least 27 people in Thailand and Vietnam this year—since it emerged here in fighting cocks last month.

Malaysia vowed to impose tougher penalties against smugglers along the Thai border, believed to be the origin of the disease here.

Agriculture Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said that the Cabinet had directed law enforcement and immigration agencies and the armed forces to redouble efforts to stop smuggling.

Traffickers were “sabotaging the country’s economy,” Muhyiddin said Wednesday, but police are regularly seizing live and frozen poultry from Thai-

land despite a nationwide alert to contain bird flu.

Malaysian poultry farmers have suffered massive losses because of import bans imposed by the European Union, Hong Kong, Japan, the Philippines and their biggest market, Singapore.

Health workers have screened more than 2,500 people in hundreds of house-to-house visits around the home where the deadly H5N1 strain of bird flu is believed to have killed chickens and quails in recent days.

The village lies within a 10-kilometer (six-mile) quarantine area where the H5N1 strain was discovered Aug. 17, in the first outbreak in this Southeast Asian country.

PSS012

RP welcomes cease-fire monitors

By TERESA CEROJANO
AP WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines on Wednesday welcomed the imminent arrival of military teams from Malaysia and Brunei to help monitor a truce with Muslim separatist guerrillas while negotiations aim to end a bloody insurgency. The cease-fire took effect last year. Mainly Muslim Malaysia agreed to host peace talks and lead international monitors on southern Mindanao island, where Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels have been fighting for a separate Muslim homeland for the last three decades.

Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi informed President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo that a nine-member Malaysian “administrative group”

will arrive in the Philippines on Friday to prepare for the full deployment of international monitors, Arroyo spokesman Ignacio Bunye said.

On Tuesday, Malaysian Defense Minister Najib Razak said his country will contribute 60 military and police officials and diplomats, who would be in the southern Philippines by Oct. 9.

Arroyo said Brunei has agreed to send 10 officials, and that she would meet with them when she visits the country Thursday for the wedding of Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah Bolkiah.

“We welcome this development as another milestone in the peace process with the MILF,” said Teresita Deles, the presidential adviser for the peace process.

She said the deployment “paves the way for the strengthening of

the prevailing cease-fire,” and “bolsters public confidence and stability on the ground.”

Other members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference—namely Bahrain, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia—have also signified their intention to send peace monitors, officials said.

The rebels said Monday they have agreed to resume formal talks after the Philippine government dropped criminal charges against rebel leaders in connection with deadly bomb attacks.

The Malaysian-brokered talks stalled after government troops seized a major rebel stronghold and guerrilla leaders were charged in connection with two bombings last year. The talks were expected to resume next month.

Philippine troops capture Abu Sayyaf commander

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine troops have captured a commander of the Abu Sayyaf Muslim extremist group who the military previously claimed it killed in a clash last year, an official said Wednesday.

Marines arrested Javier Soriano, also known as Jojo Rasul, at his hideout on Monday in Jolo town in southern Sulu province, said Brig. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, head of a regional anti-insurgency force.

Soriano has been linked to a number of kidnappings by the Abu Sayyaf, a small but violent

band loosely linked to al-Qaida and listed by Washington as a terrorist group. Authorities were offering a 150,000-peso (US\$2,600; euro 2,100) reward for his capture.

Last year, the military said he was slain during a clash with soldiers in Sulu. Captured guerrillas and informants later revealed he survived and led the military to his hideout, Dema-ala said.

Soriano, who was being interrogated, has allegedly worked under Ghalib Andang, a senior Abu Sayyaf commander captured in December also in Sulu

province, about 940 kilometers (580 miles) south of Manila.

Authorities have charged Andang with organizing the 2000 kidnapping of 21 people, including 10 Western tourists, from Sipadan island resort in neighboring Malaysia. The hostages were later freed in exchange for large ransoms, reportedly financed by Libya.

Andang has denied involvement.

U.S.-backed offensives have whittled down the Abu Sayyaf from a peak strength of more than 1,000 men in 2001 to about 300 today, the military says.

CPA

Moderate earthquakes shake Japan



The stone wall at a temple is seen destroyed following two powerful earthquakes in Shingu, western Japan, early Monday Sept. 6, 2004.

TOKYO (AP)—Three moderate earthquakes shook central Japan on Wednesday, the latest aftershocks to hit the region after two major temblors injured 43 people over the weekend.

A magnitude-6.2 quake struck at 11:58 p.m., just eight minutes after a magnitude 5.3 quake hit the same area, the Meteorological Agency said.

No damage or injuries were immediately reported.

Both were centered about six miles below the ocean floor off Japan’s eastern coastline, near the epicenters of Sunday’s magnitude 6.9 and 7.4 quakes. A magnitude-5.4 quake also struck central Japan at 3:36 a.m.

There was no danger of tsunami—huge waves triggered by seismic activity—the agency said.

The temblors were felt most strongly in rural parts of Nara prefecture (state), about 250 miles west of Tokyo. The later quake also shook parts of Kyoto and Osaka.

The government has said the recent tremors don’t signal an imminent massive quake that seismologists have predicted might strike the country’s Pacific coastline.

North Korea warns of 'nuclear arms race'

By SANG-HUN CHOE
AP WRITER

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea accused the United States of applying a double standard on the Korean Peninsula and warned Wednesday of a nuclear arms race in Northeast Asia following the revelation that South Korean scientists enriched a tiny amount of uranium in 2000.

The controversy over the South Korean experiment threatened to further disrupt troubled efforts to persuade North Korea to dismantle its suspected nuclear weapons programs.

North Korea's envoy to the United Nations, Han Sung Ryol, told South Korea's national news agency Yonhap that the communist state found the United States "worthless" as a dialogue partner because it was applying "double standards" to the two Koreas.

Han called South Korea's uranium enrichment experiment "a dangerous move that would accelerate a nuclear arms race in Northeast Asia," Yonhap said.

"We see South Korea's uranium enrichment experiment in the context of an arms race in Northeast Asia," Han was quoted as saying. "Because of the South Korean experiment, it has become difficult to control the acceleration of a nuclear arms race."

Han's comments were North Korea's first reaction to the South Korean admission this week that its scientists produced a small amount of enriched uranium in an experiment in 2000.

The reaction signaled that North Korea could use the South Korean experiment as leverage in any further talks on U.S.-led efforts to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear development.

Earlier Wednesday, South Korea said it should have reported the uranium enrichment experiment to the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency.

South Korea admitted last week that its scientists produced 0.2 grams of enriched uranium during the experiment at its main government-affiliated nuclear research institute.

"We should have reported

that uranium was used during this experiment," a senior official at the South Korean Foreign Ministry said on condition of anonymity. He spoke to reporters at a briefing.

South Korea has denied the experiment reflected an interest in developing nuclear weapons.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher has criticized the secret experiment, saying it shouldn't have occurred. But he praised South Korea for working with the International Atomic Energy Agency to make sure the program has ended.

"We have confidence that the agency will pursue all these matters," Boucher said Wednesday.

Asked whether South Korea had experimented with plutonium, Boucher withheld comment, noting the United States is aware of what Seoul has reported to the IAEA about its past activities.

In the early 1970s, South Korea was developing a nuclear weapons program, but abandoned it under U.S. pressure and signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in April 1975

before producing any fissile material required to make a bomb. A senior Bush administration official said Wednesday that those secret experiments involved plutonium.

The IAEA has asked "plutonium-related" questions during the course of routine investigations over the years, but the plutonium issue was not mentioned in the recent IAEA report on the uranium enrichment case, the South Korean Foreign Ministry official said.

"Regarding plutonium, there is nothing that could be interpreted as a violation of NPT like the current uranium enrichment case," the official said. He declined to comment in detail.

Han, the North Korean diplomat, complained the Bush administration was being unfair.

"The United States is applying double standards," Hans was quoted as saying. "While saying it trusts South Korea, it is trying to force North Korea to accept nuclear inspections, concocting a story about a HEU (highly enriched uranium) program we don't even have."

Official: South Korea test used plutonium

WASHINGTON (AP)—South Korea more than 20 years ago secretly conducted an experiment with traces of plutonium, a key ingredient in making nuclear weapons, a senior Bush administration official disclosed Wednesday.

The revelation follows disclosure last week that the U.S. ally had conducted four secret uranium-enrichment experiments four years ago.

North Korea responded on Wednesday to the uranium-enrichment experiments by warning of a "nuclear arms race" in Northeast Asia.

The United States, with the support of South Korea, Japan, China and Russia, has been trying to negotiate an end to North Korea's nuclear weapons program. The talks are due to resume at the end of the month, but no date has been announced.

Plutonium and enriched-uranium are the two key ingredients of nuclear weapons.

South Korea is discussing its actions with the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, said the senior official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The administration is aware generally of the content of South Korea's reporting to the IAEA on nuclear experimental

activity conducted in past years, another U.S. official said. The administration is confident the agency will thoroughly pursue any inconsistencies or questions, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, North Korea's envoy to the United Nations, Han Sung Ryol, told the South Korean national news agency Yonhap that it found the United States "worthless" as a dialogue partner because it applied double standards to the two Koreas. This could be a tip-off that North Korea will resist or delay efforts to halt its weapons program.

The State Department last week criticized South Korea for its secret work on uranium-enrichment while praising South Korea for working with the IAEA to make sure the program had ended.

The uranium and plutonium disclosures came amid a strenuous effort by the Bush administration to stop Iran from beginning a uranium-enrichment program that U.S. officials say could produce four nuclear weapons.

"We are in touch with the South Korean government," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Wednesday when asked whether South Korea had experimented with plutonium.



MEMORIAL RITE

Workers wearing traditional costumes carry a palanquin taking Lee Koo, one of last princes of the Joseon Dynasty, to attend Sajikdaeje Memorial Rite on the street in Seoul, South Korea. Sajikdaeje mean the gods of earth and harvest, respectively. The religious for the two gods, called Sajikdaeje, was performed to pray for the peace and good harvest of the nation. The rite, dating back to the Three Kingdoms Period, was renewed and expanded during the Goryeo and the Joseon Dynasties.

Mystery man has Japanese island abuzz

TOKYO (AP)—Hidekazu Kakoi was looking for a fishing spot about six miles off shore when he noticed something bobbing on the horizon. He pulled his boat closer and discovered a man, grasping a duffel bag.

That was just the start of the mystery.

Now recovering on the tiny island of Tanegashima, off Japan's southern coast, the mystery man has refused to speak to authorities since his rescue Sept. 2. The duffel bag floated away, and local officials say all they have to go on is the fact that he's Asian, wore a tank-top with a Korean label, and fell, jumped or was pushed into the water with his shoes on.

"He's still not talking and

we have no idea where he came from," Shoji Nakamura, an official on the island, said Wednesday. "We've never seen anything like this before."

The mystery has the island buzzing, and is starting to get national attention.

Is the man a North Korean spy? A Chinese drug-runner? A hapless Japanese landlubber?

"There's all kinds of rumors going around," Kakoi said by telephone from his island home. "Of course, he wasn't in much condition to tell me anything when I pulled him in."

Amid the otherwise frustrating lack of clues, one fact is raising eyebrows—the Korean label on the man's shirt.

Tanegashima is home to Ja-

pan's main space center. Virtually all of Japan's rockets are launched from pads on the island. Two years ago, Japan put up its first spy satellites from Tanegashima, the first of several intended to monitor missile deployments and a suspected nuclear weapons program in North Korea.

North Korean spies are known to have infiltrated Japanese waters, and in the late 1970s and 80s even kidnapped at least a dozen Japanese citizens and whisked them off to North Korea to teach their agents the Japanese language and culture.

Several abductees were finally returned to Japan two years ago, and their stories have become a well-known cautionary tale here to avoid beaches at night.

So, could the man rescued last week be a spy?

Police say that is a possibility. They also believe he might have been running drugs or was involved in some other sort of smuggling. No Japanese fishermen or divers have been reported missing in the area.

The man has a reason he doesn't want to talk, one official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Authorities, he said, can wait.

Police say the man appears to be in his 20s or 30s and is of average build. Police have tried to talk to him in Japanese, Chinese, Korean and English, but to no avail. They do not believe he is deaf or unable to speak or write.

Bobby Fischer wins deportation injunction

TOKYO (AP)—Former chess champion Bobby Fischer won a reprieve from the threat of deportation Wednesday when a court ruled he may stay in Japan until it considers a lawsuit he filed to block his ejection, his supporters said.

Fischer is wanted by the United States for violating international sanctions against Yugoslavia when he played a rematch there in 1992 against longtime rival Boris Spassky.

The Tokyo District Court granted Fischer an injunction, barring his deportation from Japan until the court hears his lawsuit, Fischer's adviser John Bosnitch said. It could take the court about a year to hear the case, he said.

Fischer's lawyers declared the injunction a "big win."

The court's ruling should bolster Fischer's argument that immigration authorities should release him from detention, Bosnitch said.

"There could be a potential wait of up to a year before trial ruling," he said. "It would be highly irregular to detain him without charge for a year."

Fischer has been in Japanese custody since July 13 when he was stopped at Tokyo's international airport trying to board a flight for the Philippines with

an invalid passport. He has claimed, however, that U.S. officials had revoked his passport without following due process.

Fischer has, through his supporters, denounced the deportation order as politically motivated. He has said he wants to renounce his U.S. citizenship and is threatening to apply for German citizenship or political asylum in a third country.

Fischer also made progress in his campaign to marry his longtime companion Miyoko Watai, the head of the Japan Chess Association, when municipal authorities tentatively accepted his application for the marriage.

The couple filed to register their marriage with the authorities last month as Fischer tried a number of ploys to prevent deportation. Watai told reporters, however, that they had been living together since 2000 and were only trying to legally formalize their long-running relationship.

Authorities in Ohta ward, a district in Tokyo, initially rejected their application because they said Fischer lacked the necessary documents. They later provisionally accepted it based on a photocopy of Fischer's passport and assurances from Fischer that he was single and fit to be married, Bosnitch said.

India, Pakistan report progress on Kashmir

NEW DELHI (AP)—India and Pakistan said Wednesday they were considering scaling back thousands of troops from a Kashmir battlefield. U.N. chief Kofi Annan said he was “heartened” by the progress the nuclear-armed neighbors have made in talks to resolve the long-simmering issue.

In a joint statement, Indian External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh and Pakistani Foreign Minister Khursheed Kasuri “reiterated the confidence that the composite dialogue will lead to peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both sides.”

Annan welcomes the outcome of the meeting between Singh and Kasuri, and “is heartened that the two sides continue to make steady progress towards resolving outstanding issues and improving their bilateral relations,” said U.N. spokesman Fred Eckhard.

For the first time in almost six decades, Indian and Pakistani tourists will be able to travel across the border under an agreement announced Wednesday. Until now, there was no provision for a tourist visa between the two countries and people “had to invent a relative” to be able to travel, Kasuri told the Indian state-run Doordarshan television network.

The statement was released before Kasuri flew back to Islamabad after a visit in which the sides agreed to hold expert-level meetings on securing conventional and nuclear weapons, and study a new cross-border railroad link and a bus service across the divided portions of Kashmir.

Pakistani President Pervez

Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will meet on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly meeting later this month.

On Monday, Kasuri and Singh exchanged barbs over Kashmir as they stood side by side, but they agreed not to let their differences block the peace process.

Singh said Islamic militants continued to sneak into India’s portion of Kashmir from the Pakistani side, despite a promise by Pakistan’s President Gen. Pervez Musharraf in January to prevent his nation’s territory from being used as a staging ground for attacks against India.

Pakistan says that it doesn’t support the militants, and that it is clamping down on them.

Kasuri in turn accused India of doing little about alleged human rights abuses by Indian security forces in Kashmir.

More than 65,000 people have died in Kashmir since an armed insurgency began in 1989 by the militants who demand Kashmir’s independence or merger with Pakistan. The Himalayan enclave has been divided since independence from Britain in 1947.

India and Pakistan have fought three wars. Their relations have been overshadowed by their competing territorial claims for the mountainous region of Kashmir, and a violent insurgency by Pakistan-based militant groups in the Indian-controlled portion.

It also said both sides had agreed to discuss pulling back some 10,000 troops from the Siachen Glacier, which traverses Kashmir. Troops from both nations have faced each other atop the 20,000-foot icy region since 1984.



Combo photos shows Brunei’s Sultan Hassanah Bolkiah, right, applies henna to his Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah Bolkiah, (left photo), and his bride Sarah Salleh (right photo) during the henna ceremony at the palace in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2004. AP

Brunei gears up for Asia’s wedding of the year

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Brunei (AP)—Dignitaries and blue bloods from around the world began arriving Wednesday for the lavish nuptials of the crown prince of the tiny, oil-rich sultanate of Brunei, in what is expected to be Asia’s wedding of the year.

Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah Bolkiah, 30, son of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah—the absolute and fabulously wealthy ruler of his 350,000 subjects—is to marry 17-year-old commoner Sarah Salleh on Thursday.

The ceremony tops off two weeks of official celebrations taking place in one of the region’s smallest countries, which shares Borneo island with Malaysia and Indonesia.

The crown prince was educated at Oxford. His bride is “known among her teachers and friends for her grace, intelligence and positive attitude,” the official wedding booklet says.

Her mother is from Switzerland, but gave up her Swiss citizenship in the 1970s, moved to Brunei and worked with the Health Ministry, government spokesman Bujang Masu’ut said.

Huge billboards showing the couple lined the streets of the usually sleepy capital, Bandar Seri Begawan, where a parade was scheduled after the wedding ceremony at the 1,788-room main palace.

The couple will sit on a royal dais for a traditional Muslim wedding ritual before invited guests Thursday morning, after which they are to make an eight-kilometer (five-mile) parade across the capital in a carriage, accompanied by 103 limousines and vehicles carrying royal family members.

Many businesses prominently displayed their well-wishes for the wedding. Some said they were pressured to do so, but Bruneians are reluctant to speak ill of the sultan and his family, who have

ruled behind a veil of secrecy for more than 500 years.

Among the dignitaries expected at the wedding are Japan’s Crown Prince Naruhito, Bahrain’s King Hamad, the Duke of Gloucester Prince Richard, Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia and most of Malaysia’s royalty.

Naruhito arrived on Wednesday but his wife, Crown Princess Masako, stayed behind. The Imperial Household Agency said in July that Masako, 40, has experienced bouts of depression and anxiety and was undergoing treatment.

Other guests include presidents Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo of the Philippines and prime ministers Thaksin Shinawatra of Thailand, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia and Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore.

Elder statesmen Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia and Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore also

were among the 6,000 people invited from around the world.

“The airport hasn’t been this busy in a while and there are many guests who will come and see our country,” said Amin Subehi, a worker at Brunei International Airport.

The ruling family’s extravagance is legendary, and the sultan was the world’s richest man before the advent of the high-tech era—and a series of financial blunders blamed on his younger brother, Prince Jefri, in the 1990s.

The sultan is also Brunei’s prime minister and heads the military and ministries of defense and finance. His Cabinet includes royal family members, who stay in several palaces.

A big fireworks display is to follow Friday’s grand banquet. The local unit of oil giant Royal Dutch Shell has donated 500,000 Brunei dollars (US\$292,400; euro 243,700) for the display and cultural events.

Hong Kong readies for legislative election

HONG KONG (AP)—As Hong Kong wraps up a hotly contested legislative campaign, China’s presence looms large amid charges it marred the contest with dirty tricks while at the same time trying to woo voters with a charm offensive.

Human rights activists alleged in a report being released Thursday that Beijing has muscled in on Hong Kong politics to create a “climate of fear” ahead of Sunday’s election that is expected to give opposition figures more clout in an anti-government backlash.

New York-based Human Rights Watch cited the case of a man reportedly told to take a picture of his completed election ballot or his business would suffer, as well as allegations someone scrawled the words “all Chinese traitors must die” on a lawmaker’s wall.

Hong Kong’s government

called the Human Rights Watch report “a distorted picture of the situation,” and said authorities are investigating all criminal complaints to ensure balloting is free and fair.

Beijing remains worried about the election outcome as ordinary people pick 30 of the territory’s 60 Legislative Council seats. Hong Kong’s leader, Tung Chee-hwa, was chosen by an elite pro-Beijing committee and is highly unpopular.

But the opposition is unlikely to gain a majority because special interest groups—such as business leaders—pick 30 seats under a system critics liken to putting lobbyists in the legislature.

Analysts predict pro-democracy figures will end up with between 25 and 28 seats—enough to block government legislation with help from just a few swing votes.

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kfc
+red/blue

Two programs rescue damaged discs

By **PETER SVENSSON**
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—You know it's bound to happen: One of the CDs you've burned is going to stop working—be it from scratches, aging, poor manufacturing or the fact that it was made with old software.

But don't turn that disc into a drink coaster quite yet.

I was pleasantly surprised with two recovery programs I tested—the \$39.50 BadCopy Pro and the \$29.50 CDRoller.

Both retrieved all files from two discs I'd given up on.

One was a CD-R burned using Hewlett-Packard Co.'s HP DLA software, which allows users to write files to a disc one at a time at leisure, unlike Roxio Inc.'s Easy CD Creator, which write entire data discs at once. DLA is convenient, but not so reliable, it turns out. My Windows XP computer refused to recognize the CD at all.

The other problematic disc was a CD-RW. Rewriteable discs are usually written with

software similar in concept to DLA. Frustratingly, my computer could read some of its files some of the time, but I could never retrieve all of them.

In short, I suspect poor software, rather than scratches or other damage, for the malfunction of both discs.

Neither one fazed BadCopy Pro and CDRoller, however. The manufacturers say the programs work by communicating directly with the disc drive, bypassing the disc-reading software that comes with the

Windows operating system. Almost any drive should work with either program.

The edge, however, goes to BadCopy Pro. CDRoller managed to retrieve all files from the CD-R, but not their file names, naming rescued files as File0001, File0002 and so on.

CDRoller is designed only for rescue operations on "packet-written" discs—CD-RWs, CD-Rs and their DVD equivalents written with "drag and drop" software like DLA.

BadCopy Pro claims it can

also rescue some scratched discs, but it failed to get anything meaningful out of a disc I had scratched intentionally through the label. No doubt the severity of the scratch will make a difference.

Don't expect a high standard of polish from either program. Both have clunky, mildly confusing user interfaces, as is common in software from small companies. They also work slowly.

But if you're getting back files you thought were forever gone, you won't mind.

Atari to reissue scores of old games

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Atari wants to take you back in time, and to get there, you can ride a "Centipede" or an "Asteroid," or bounce back and forth between the pixelated paddles of "Pong."

The video game company told The Associated Press on Tuesday it plans to reissue scores of its classic titles from yesteryear on a single disc that can be played on the game consoles Xbox and PlayStation 2.

"Atari Anthology" will feature 85 games and is scheduled to go on sale in November at a cost of about \$20.

But it's only one of the nostalgia projects Atari will push into the market then. The second is Atari Flashback, a slightly miniaturized version of the old Atari 7800 from the mid-'80s. It will have 20 games built into it, including "Breakout," "Solaris," "Crystal Castles" and "Battlezone."

Flashback will sell for \$45 and include a pair of old-school joysticks.

Atari isn't expecting its decades-old games to compete on a technical level, like "Grand Theft Auto: Vice City," "Halo" and "Madden NFL 2005" that feature colorful realistic graphics, fast-moving 3-D action and the freedom to roam at will.

Instead, the company is aiming at the nostalgia market.

"It's a time machine. You go back to your childhood and you play," Atari chief executive Bruno Bonnell said.

And for gamers who weren't even born when the first PlayStation appeared?

"The kids will think this is quick, this is fast to understand, and we don't need a manual to understand it," he added. "We're going after two generations."

Even "Pong," perhaps the most primitive of the games with its simple white square bouncing across the screen, may still have some appeal.

"The more primitive the better. It shows that video games are not just about high-end graphics or sophisticated representation. It's about the game-play, the challenge to the player," Bonnell said.

The "Atari Anthology" disc will offer new twists on the games, too: "trippy mode," which renders the graphics in psychedelic colors, and "time warp" and "double speed," which can alter the pace of on-screen action.

Besides its array of classic Atari 2600 and 7800 titles, the Atari Flashback console will include one previously unreleased game: "Saboteur."

REVIEW

Microsoft's OneNote organizes data

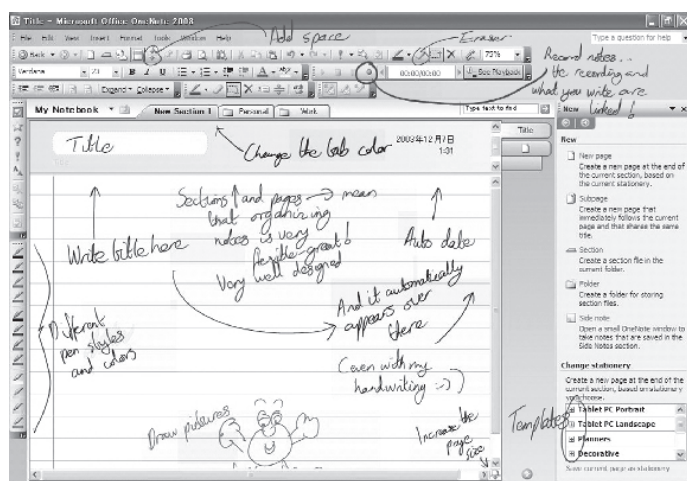
By **TED ANTHONY**
AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Consider the New World of Information—stuff that, unlike the paper days of the past, doesn't always physically exist. You've got notes, scrawlings and snippets, Web graphics, photos and sounds. Stuff needs to be cut, pasted, highlighted, annotated, crossed out, dragged away. And, as Ross Perot used to say (or maybe it was Dana Carvey impersonating him), don't forget the graphs and charts.

In an era of miscellany, when stacking notebooks to the ceiling simply isn't practical, what's a data obsessive to do?

Those of us who answer to that moniker now have a savior. And—pause for effect—it's from Microsoft.

The meekly marketed OneNote, the software behemoth's marvelous electronic filing cabinet, is The Answer when it comes to socking away the bits of wisdom and useful information we spend much of



our lives trying to store. And after the year-old software's latest update, Service Pack 1, it's even more user-friendly and customizable.

OneNote is modeled on a classic college spiral notebook and chockablock with pages, tabs and sections. But it's like no notebook you've ever seen. It's unlimited, for one.

You can type, sure, but with a drawing pad or Tablet PC you can also write in script, draw with assorted pens and highlight in an assortment of pleasing

pastels. You can insert sections between notes and drop whole hunks of data anywhere.

Unlike a regular notebook, you can reconfigure your data entirely—to move a page of lists from, say, the "People I Hate" section to the "People I'm Considering Giving Another Chance" tab.

Fonts? Use 'em all—bold, italic and multicolored—right next to each other, with none of the line and column constraints of a regular word processor. And speaking of word processors,

you can capture an image of an entire Word 2003 document and drop it into a OneNote page.

Video? Drop it in, too—and synchronize it with written notes. Record sound while you're taking lecture notes—a feature especially useful for college students, a demographic targeted by Microsoft for OneNote.

But that's only the beginning. OneNote represents, really, an entirely new approach to information.

While many information managers are hierarchical and modeled after Windows Explorer, they can be difficult for non-techheads to use. OneNote doesn't oversimplify things, but it's intuitive comfortable—not common features in software.

Microsoft is aiming OneNote at office workers in creative industries who use Tablet PCs that run its special edition of Windows XP. That's a good move and a bad move: good because OneNote on a tablet approximates a digital notebook even more closely; bad because not many users have tablets.

The new Service Pack 1 release of OneNote makes some improvements that render it even more usable. You can make the notebook tabs larger or smaller, change dates on notes and paste large images much more quickly. Password protection, key for anyone's notes on a portable computer, is built right in.

That's not to say the next version couldn't use some improvements.

I found the search function a bit unwieldy—not because it didn't find the data I was looking for but because the interface didn't let me manipulate the display the way I wanted. And additional sorting mechanisms (like the categories feature used in Microsoft Outlook and other Office products) would end the need to store duplicate notes in different sections and folders.

Also, the methods for moving items to and from sections and folders isn't very intuitive; Microsoft might consider simplifying it with a drag-and-drop option on the main folder-directory.

Playboy to feature video game characters

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Playboy is taking a chance on silicon instead of silicone. The October issue of the men's magazine features several video game characters posing in the nude—images created by the game companies through detailed computer illustration.

"Hopefully the purists won't get too bent out of shape. This is just the next version of the pinup," said Playboy senior editor Scott Alexander, who developed the project.

The computerized models are part of the magazine's video game preview, titled "Gaming Grows Up." The five-page section starts with a topless image of the half-vampire, half-human title character from "BloodRayne," a leather-clad woman who fights with three-foot blades attached to her arms.

The next image is a full-frontal, two-page foldout of a character named Luba Licious from the upcoming mature-rated comedy

game "Leisure Suit Larry," which is about a shrimpy guy who travels a college campus courting impossibly buxom coeds.

The images even feature the signature Playboy centerfold-style bio. "We treated these women just like they are celebrities," Alexander said. "We treated them real, as if they had turn-ons and turn-offs."

In between are short articles about upcoming games like "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas," racing games like "Need for Speed: Underground 2," and "Gran Turismo 4," and battle games like "Men of Valor," "Full Spectrum Warrior" and "Medal of Honor: Pacific Assault."

"Part of the thrust of the piece is that gaming is not just for kids," Alexander said. "We want to establish the way Playboy's going to be covering video games. We want to cover them from perspective of an adult who has a life. We're not writing video game reviews for kids who play

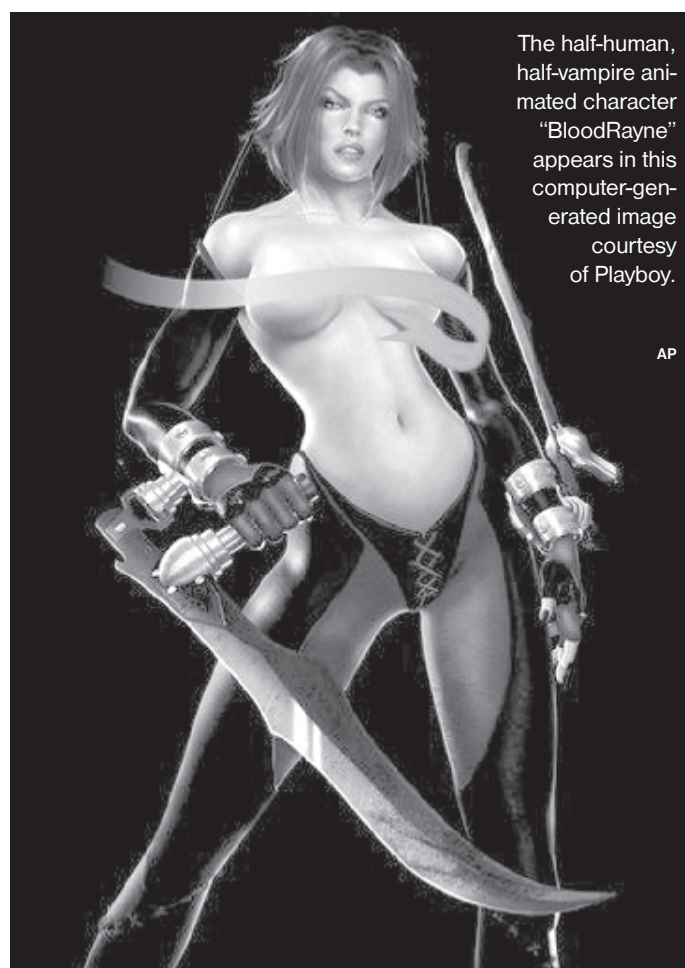
five hours a day. We're writing for the grown-up who may play five hours a week, if that much."

While real models with silicone-implanted curves are no stranger to Playboy pictorials, digital women rendered through silicon computer processors could become a regular feature if reader reaction is positive.

All the images from the October issue are from mature-rated games carrying Entertainment Software Ratings Board warnings that the titles are inappropriate for those under 17.

Charles Hirschhorn, founder and chief executive of the G4techTV network, a 24-hour cable channel devoted to video games, said grown-up gamers aren't prudes, so Playboy's pictorial was unlikely to offend.

"Video games are inherently based on fantasy," he said, "so it's only natural that you'll be able to race cars, and go into outer space and find attractive sexy women as characters."



The half-human, half-vampire animated character "BloodRayne" appears in this computer-generated image courtesy of Playboy.

AP

Life & Style

Cole, Ellis open New York fashion week

By SAMANTHA CRITCHELL
AP FASHION EDITOR

New York Fashion Week began with Kenneth Cole, Perry Ellis and Tracy Reese showing their softer sides in clothes that appeared ready for next year's vacation.

Even anti-establishment label Imitation of Christ followed the relaxed trend when it came to actual garments, but, of course, the show was anything but the norm.

The collective palette at the Bryant Park tents in midtown Manhattan Wednesday was largely muted tangerine, lime green and ocean blue, with black, white and neutrals that are meant to be the user-friendly mix-and-match pieces.

Some 80 shows were scheduled during the week, including Carolina Herrera, Bill Blass, Nicole Miller and Tommy Hilfiger on Thursday, and Vera Wang, Monique Lhuillier, Cynthia Rowley and Zac Posen on Friday's schedule.

Heavy rain didn't deter the fashion faithful as Cole opened the eight days of spring 2005 previews with his signature pop culture-laced video, including references to a certain pop star's wardrobe malfunction and Donald Trump's hit NBC reality show, "The Apprentice." But instead of making a partisan political statement, which he's done in the past, this message simply encouraged everyone to get out and vote.

"Nov. 2 is not a dress rehearsal," Cole said.

Meanwhile, his runway show offered editors, retailers and fashion fans (actor Alan Cumming among them) a leisurely look with strapless dresses with flattering vertical panels and boning, crisp motor pants with zipper details and gauzy sweaters for women, and cotton canvas suits and white jeans for men.

The women's tank-style swimsuits were so practical, they almost seemed odd at a fashion

show, but the itty-bitty men's swim briefs were a reminder of why most people prefer conservative beachwear.

There was a sexiness to some styles—a cotton gauze camisole with a matte-and-shine viscose paneled skirt, for example—but more for their gentle and demure characteristics than blatant skin appeal.

Patrick Robinson, designer of Perry Ellis' women's line, said he wanted to capture "the new romance" that can be found in feminine, more modest clothes. It looked like he used the Victorian era for inspiration when he created a cream satin brocade pinched-waist jacket over a white dress with flowing ruffles and a light green cummerbund.

"After wearing tweed and camel hair all winter, I wanted to offer women something light, delicate and pretty," he told The Associated Press.

Robinson said that as he was putting the collection together, he noticed there were very few prints, but instead of adding bold or geometric patterns that would work against his theme, he opted for textured brocade and jacquard fabrics to add richness to the garments.

While the designer used feminine ruffles, flower appliques and bows, he kept the overall look from becoming too fussy as the details were mostly on short jackets that didn't overwhelm the outfits.

Jerry Kaye, Perry Ellis' menswear designer, took a more country-club approach as he put models in peak-lapel suits in navy with pique button-down shirts, and white trousers and jeans with lime-and-navy V-neck sweaters.

Designer Tracy Reese concentrated on spring coats with open collars and swinging hems, and dresses perfect for cocktails in the garden. Her prints had names such as "garden of Eden" and "weeping willow," and her

"peacock" print was just that: a stunning fan of blue, green and some black.

She offered one unusual silhouette, something she called a "cummerbund cami," essentially a tank top with a high-waisted belt and a panel that hung in front from the waist to the bottom of the shirt.

The most wearable pieces from Imitation of Christ were cotton T-shirt versions of Greek goddess dresses, worn with warrior-style sandals that are part of IOC designer Tara Subkoff's new line for Easy Spirit.

Some dresses had rope-style belts that made a nice touch.

However, the runway show, which attracted Jennifer Jason Leigh, Gretchen Mol and Subkoff's pal Chloe Sevigny, seemed endless, and the finale was a disappointing parade of sour-faced models stomping out of the venue and an even grimmer looking Subkoff following them.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Has Ken Jennings' 'Jeopardy!' run ended?

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Has Ken Jennings ended his "Jeopardy!" streak? A report posted Wednesday on TV Week's Web site said the brainy software engineer lost in a show taped Tuesday, walking away after his 75th straight game with about \$2.5 million overall in cash and prizes. The magazine cited unidentified sources and said the show would air later this fall.

A spokesperson for the show told TV Week that it would not disclose whether Jennings lost.

Calls late Wednesday by The Associated Press to "Jeopardy!" publicist Jeff Ritter and to the show's production offices were not immediately returned.

Jennings, 30, of Salt Lake City, began his record-breaking run June 2, with a six-week hiatus for summer reruns.

After winning the show that aired Wednesday, his 41st, he had amassed \$1,380,661.

To mark the start of its 20th season last September, the quiz show lifted its five-game limit for winners and allowed them to keep going until they lose.

Charges against rapper Loon dismissed

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—A judge has dismissed assault charges against rapper

Loon, who was arrested in February after a security guard was stabbed outside a nightclub.

Superior Court Judge Richard Stone dismissed the case against the rapper, whose real name is Chauncey Hawkins, at a preliminary hearing.

District attorney's office spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons said neither the victim nor a witness could identify the attacker.

Hawkins, 29, was charged with assault with a deadly weapon following the incident outside the House of Blues in West Hollywood. He posted \$1 million bail.

Loon is signed on P. Diddy's Bad Boy label and released his first album, "Loon," last year.

Also dismissed Wednesday were assault charges against two acquaintances, William Reyes, 23, and Teon Tanqueray, 27.

Authorities said the 32-year-old security guard was wounded Feb. 13 after he refused to let the three men into a party for Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz.

'The Apprentice' returns for more firings

NEW YORK (AP)—With a new round of "The Apprentice" ready to go, Donald Trump is fired. Fired up, that is. Maybe even more fired up than usual.

His show—back for a second season at 8:30 p.m. EDT Thursday on NBC—is even bet-

ter than before, crows the billionaire businessman, who can afford to brag, especially since the first time around he saved NBC's bacon and made "You're fired!" a bankable catchphrase.

But though never one to shrink from the spotlight, Trump signed on for "The Apprentice" just to have a good time, he insists. The first edition's finale in April—when he hired Bill Rancic to oversee a Chicago construction project—drew more than 28 million people. "You can have a really good time when that happens," Trump told The Associated Press last week.

Besides, it doesn't cut into his schedule as much as you might think. "Frankly, the biggest time (demand) is when I have to fly to California to do a Jay Leno or something," he said. His show "is not scripted, there's nothing to study; it's something that we have down to a science."

"We" includes Mark Burnett, who created "Survivor" for CBS and then made lightning strike again with "The Apprentice."

Each vying for Trump's \$250,000-a-year "dream job of a lifetime," the 18 candidates were chosen from 1 million applicants, said Trump, which, if strictly accurate, would mean one-third of 1 percent of everybody in the United States took a shot—or every attractive person slightly too old to audition for "American Idol."



Liliane wears a Chartreuse dropped flounce slip during the showing of the Tracy Reese Spring 2005 collection, Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2004 in New York.

AP

“The unabashedly liberal Moore clearly has an agenda with Fahrenheit 9/11. It can’t be coincidence that it was released in the thick of the race for the presidential election.”



By JOE WEINDL
Special to the
Saipan Tribune

Old album with Kerry fetches high prices

By **MICHAEL HILL**
AP WRITER

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—This could finally be the Electras' breakout year.

Rare vinyl copies of their lone 1961 recording are fetching prices north of \$2,000, even though the band tended to stray from the beat. Two separate CD versions of that same recording are being sold after some "Behind The Music"-style intra-band squabbling.

Of course, it's not musical chops that has renewed interest in this obscure garage rock recording; it's the bassist: Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry.

"Their enthusiasm is only muted by the fact that they weren't that good," summed up Chuck Miller, an Albany-based columnist for Goldmine magazine who recently bought a slightly scuffed copy of the vinyl album.

The Electras were formed in the fall of 1960 at St. Paul's School, a tony private boarding school in Concord, N.H. The band was named for a cool looking Buick—not the Greek mythological character—and they played pre-Beatles standards by Eddie Cochran and the Ventures at local school dances.

The seven members (with help from their parents) put together about \$1,000 to produce their one album in 1961. In a basement music room with a single microphone, the teen



Chuck Miller holds his copy of the only album made by The Electras, in 1961, at his home in Albany, N.Y., Aug. 1, 2004.

rockers ripped through covers including "Summertime Blues" and "Ya Ya."

The songs tend to sound like surf music with an overlay of boogie-woogie piano. Most tracks are instrumentals. Careful listeners can pick out the steady thump of Kerry's bass—nothing fancy, though the liner notes credit him as the "producer of a pulsating rhythm." (The same notes also call the diplomat's son a resident of Oslo, Norway.)

"Frankly, I think he and I were probably the best musicians in the band," said Electras pianist Jack Radcliffe, now a Boston-area newspaper editor who still performs as "Ragtime"

Jack. "Although his beat wasn't great for a bass player."

Kerry left the band after high school, although he reportedly strums the Spanish classical guitar on the campaign trail and is learning to play patriotic nuggets like "This Land is Your Land."

Of the 500 albums pressed, the few that have shown up on the market have sold for big money. Miller recently paid \$800 to a dealer for a less-than-mint copy that has the name of an old St. Paul's schoolmate inked on the cover. Another copy sold this year for about \$2,500, to the amazement of the old band members.

"Somebody has to be crazy to pay anything like that for

the album," said Larry Rand, the Electras' lead guitarist and vocalist, better known as a constitutional law scholar and semi-retired teacher in Connecticut.

Rand helped spearhead a remastering of the original tape now available through www.electrasrockandrollband.com for \$14. He said the reissue was essentially done as a lark now that his old bandmate is running for president.

But Radcliffe, the pianist, balked at the agreement signed by the rest of the band earlier this year, saying the maracas player and the saxophonist were being denied their fair share of proceeds. He noted the saxophonist's

image was expunged from the group shot on the Web site.

Radcliffe produced an alternate CD for the same price through www.johnkerryandtheelectras.com. He said his version preserves the original album cover artwork, a scrawled line drawing of a generic rock band, and the liner notes.

Neither Rand nor Radcliffe have gotten feedback from Kerry about the CDs. Kerry campaign spokeswoman Juanita Scarlett confirmed the candidate has no involvement with the reissues, but added: "It's not surprising that John Kerry's album is a hot commodity now. He's a man of many talents."

Rand said the original profit cuts were determined by law-

yers based on contributions to the album, but the band members have since decided to share equally seven ways "in the spirit of fairness."

Both versions of the CD are attracting sales—Radcliffe said he has moved about 400 copies, and Rand said he's sold more than 500—but interest in Kerry's first band of brothers could really heat up if he becomes the next president.

While a lot of presidents played musical instruments—including Thomas Jefferson (violin), Warren G. Harding (cornet) and Harry Truman (piano)—a victorious Kerry also would enter the far more exclusive club of presidents who rocked, along with saxophonist Bill Clinton.

Disney may sell trademarks over suit

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP)—Disney Enterprises may have to sell its trademarks in South Africa to pay for damages if a poor family wins a lawsuit claiming it lost millions in royalties from the hit song "The Lion Sleeps Tonight."

The Pretoria High Court on Tuesday dismissed an application by Disney Enterprises to prevent its trademarks from being sold off if the family of the late musician Solomon Linda, who wrote the original song, "Mbube," in 1939, wins its suit.

Lawyers for Linda's family obtained a court order in July attaching more than 240 trade-

marks registered here to their \$1.6 million lawsuit in order to establish local jurisdiction.

The trademarks, which include well-known images such as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, could be sold locally to pay Linda's heirs if they win their lawsuit, according to Tuesday's ruling.

Linda's three surviving daughters and 10 grandchildren, living in poverty in the Johannesburg township of Soweto, have received only a one-time payment of \$15,000, according to their lawyers.

"It means that Mickey Mouse is still in captivity," said Adri

Malan, spokesman for the family's legal team.

Joyce Lorigan, a London-based spokeswoman for Disney, said the judgment Tuesday was disappointing, but had no impact on the substance of the dispute.

"The real issue in this lawsuit is whether Linda's estate or Abilene Music Publishing—who bought the rights to the song from Linda's wife—owns the copyright to 'The Lion Sleeps Tonight,'" Lorigan said in a statement.

The action is based on laws in Commonwealth nations at the time the song was first recorded. Under these provisions, the rights to a song

revert to the composer's heirs 25 years after his death.

No court date has been set.

Linda died penniless in 1962, having sold the rights to his original song to the South African company Abilene Music Publishing. It went on to generate an estimated \$15 million in royalties after it was adapted by other artists, including the American songwriter George Weiss, whose version is featured in "The Lion King."

The song has been covered by at least 150 artists, including The Tokens, George Michael, Miriam Makeba and The Spinners.

WALLACE

Court: Sampling may violate copyright law

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—A federal appeals court ruled Tuesday that rap artists should pay for every musical sample included in their work—even minor, unrecognizable snippets of music.

Lower courts had already ruled that artists must pay when they sample another artists' work. But it has been legal to use musical snippets—a note here, a chord there—as long as it wasn't identifiable.

The decision by a three-judge panel of the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati gets rid of

that distinction. The court said federal laws aimed at stopping piracy of recordings applies to digital sampling.

"If you cannot pirate the whole sound recording, can you 'lift' or 'sample' something less than the whole? Our answer to that question is in the negative," the court said.

"Get a license or do not sample. We do not see this as stifling creativity in any significant way."

Some observers questioned whether the court's opinion is too restrictive, especially for rap

and hip-hop artists who often rhyme over samples of music taken from older recordings.

"It seems a little extreme to me," said James Van Hook, dean of Belmont University's Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business. "When something is identifiable, that is the key."

The case at issue is one of at least 800 lawsuits filed in Nashville over lifting snippets of music from older recordings for new music.

The case centers on the NWA

song "100 Miles and Runnin'," which samples a three-note guitar riff from "Get Off Your Ass and Jam" by '70s funk-master George Clinton and Funkadelic.

In the two-second sample, the guitar pitch has been lowered, and the copied piece was "looped" and extended to 16 beats. The sample appears five times in the new song.

NWA's song was included in the 1998 movie "I Got the Hook Up," starring Master P and produced by his movie company, No Limit Films.

Parents have hissy fit when baby sitter kills pet snake

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I am a 15-year-old girl who baby-sits for extra money. I baby-sat for a new family last week. After I put the kids to bed, I found a snake in the house. I was scared for the kids, so I grabbed a kitchen knife and chopped off the snake's head.

When the parents returned, I found out it was their pet snake that had escaped from its cage, and they were really angry. I feel terrible about it. Although I apologized, they won't talk to me when they see me in the neighborhood.

Should I write them a letter of apology or buy them a new snake? I don't know what the proper etiquette is when you kill someone's pet.

RATTLED IN TEXAS

DEAR RATTLED: You reacted to what you perceived as a danger. What is unfortunate is that the couple for whom you were baby-sitting were so careless they not only failed to tell you they had an exotic pet in the house, but also compounded it by leaving without making sure the creature was securely in its cage where it belonged. You do not "owe" the family a replacement. They owe you an apology.

DEAR ABBY: I was sexually harassed at the age of 7. I wasn't raped; I was just touched and used by my brother's friend.

I am now 13 and I'm very fond of one boy in particular. But ever since I was 7, I can't open up to guys. When I try, I get scared because I remember what happened to me.

I never told my parents what happened, because I never felt like I needed to. But now I'm getting older and I realize how wrong it was—of him, I mean. I was so young I didn't understand what was happening.

I want some help, but I don't know where to go, so I've turned to you. Please help me, Abby.

SCARRED 4 LIFE

DEAR YOUNG LADY: Please clip this letter, give it to your mother and tell her you wrote it. You were not harassed; you were MOLESTED. It is important that you talk about what happened with a professional, possibly one who specializes in post-traumatic stress, who can help you work it through. The sooner you start, the sooner you can begin to build healthy relationships with peers. I wish you the best of luck.

P.S. I regret that you didn't report the molestation to your parents when it occurred. Had you done so, you could have received help then, and guaranteed that the boy could not abuse another child.

DEAR ABBY: Do you think it is appropriate for a brother (age 21) and a sister (age 17) to share the same bed? The siblings each have a large, comfortable bed of their own, but frequently wind up sharing. This is very troubling to a dear friend of mine, who is their stepparent. It seems the biological parent is hesitant to discourage the behavior, and only reluctantly admits it might be inappropriate.

JUST ASKING IN HOUSTON

DEAR JUST: I am mystified at the attitude of the biological parent, who appears to be ignoring a possibly incestuous relationship. Of course it's not appropriate. The "children" should have been sleeping apart since well before puberty.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)



Dear Abby

Bacall balks after Kidman called 'legend'

LONDON (AP)—How old is a movie legend? Definitely older than 37-year-old Nicole Kidman, according to screen veteran Lauren Bacall. Bacall became irritated during an interview with Britain's GMTV Wednesday when the younger actress was described as "a legend."

"She's not a legend," Bacall said, cutting off interviewer Jenni Falconer in mid-sentence.

"She's a beginner. What is this 'legend'? She can't be a legend at whatever age she is. She can't be a legend, you have to be older."

The two actresses were in Venice, Italy to promote their new film "Birth," in which 79-year-old Bacall plays Kidman's mother.

At a joint interview, reporters peppered Kidman with questions and, embarrassed, she finally suggested they direct their questions elsewhere.

Bacall, the former wife of Humphrey Bogart and star of such films as "The Big Sleep"

and "Key Largo," insisted she and Kidman get along famously.

The two women acted together once before, with Bacall playing a supporting role in Kidman's star vehicle "Dogville" last year.

"I love working with a young actress," Bacall said. "Nicole and I worked together on Dogville and we were friends when we started this. That laid the groundwork for our fabulous relationship on screen and off."

In the film, Kidman plays a woman who believes her dead husband has been reincarnated in the body of a 10-year-old boy.

The assembled stars and the film's director and producer, were asked who they would like to come back as if they could be reincarnated.

The others gamely tried to answer the question but Bacall snapped: "It's not a fascinating question. No offense."

Australian movie star Nicole Kidman waves to the cameras after a photo call at the 61st edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, northern Italy, Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2004.

AP



Hepburn estate donating collection

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Katharine Hepburn's estate is giving back to the group that awarded the famed actress four Oscars.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences library has received thousands of photographs and decades worth of letters, scrapbooks and screenplays Hepburn saved over her career.

She meticulously stored ob-

jects documenting her life and career, which spanned 60 years. Academy officials said the donation is one of the most comprehensive collections devoted to any performer's career.

The collection of letters includes numerous exchanges with directors, including George Cukor, John Huston and David Lean.

There also is material showing her involvement in social

and political issues and her close personal relationships with Cary Grant, Tennessee Williams, Laurence Olivier, John Wayne, Henry Fonda, and of course, Spencer Tracy.

Hepburn, who died in June 2003 at 96, received 12 Oscar nominations; her four wins are a record for an actor or actress.

Once fully catalogued, the collection will be made available to qualified researchers.

Julianne Moore to do public service ads

NEW YORK (AP)—Julianne Moore wants to give children more time for their imaginations—and she's doing it one watch at a time.

The 43-year-old actress will appear in a public service campaign bearing the slogan, "Time is Precious: Use it Wisely," seeking to highlight the declining resources available for chil-

dren's arts education programs and reverse the trend.

With each purchase of a Montblanc watch or pen, the luxury accessory brand will make a contribution to the National Arts Education Initiative, a program of the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF).

The campaign will run in fashion and lifestyle publica-

tions starting in October and continue until next March.

Moore has received four Oscar nominations, including best actress nominations for 2002's "Far From Heaven" and 1999's "The End of the Affair," and best supporting actress nominations for 2002's "The Hours" and 1997's "Boogie Nights." Her next film, "The Forgotten," opens Sept. 24.

Group Franz Ferdinand wins Mercury prize

LONDON (AP)—Scottish rockers Franz Ferdinand, whose debut album has been hailed by critics as a masterpiece of pop, won the prestigious Mercury Music Prize.

The Glasgow-based quartet were the favorites among the 12-strong shortlist to take home the award for their self-titled album.

The \$35,600 prize, now in its 13th year, honors the best album of the year by a British or Irish band. It is judged on talent and innovation rather than commercial sales, and the winner can usually expect a surge in sales and publicity.

Among the acts Franz Ferdinand beat for the prize, announced Tuesday, were two-time nominee The Streets, aka



AP

Sharon Osbourne, center, presents Scottish band Franz Ferdinand with the award for Band of the Year during the 7th annual GQ Men Of The Year Awards at the Royal Opera House in London, Tuesday.

rapper Mike Skinner; young soul sensation Joss Stone; urban star Jamelia; and guitarless rock band Keane.

The shortlist was rounded out by new rockers The Zu-

tons, jazz singer Amy Winehouse, Northern Irish quartet Snow Patrol, dance outfit Basement Jaxx, pop group Belle & Sebastian, rapper Ty and singer Robert Wyatt.

Hollywood Reporter hails 100-episode mark

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Counting to 100 used to be so much easier for TV producers. The Hollywood Reporter is dedicating a 108-page issue Thursday to explore TV programs that have reached that benchmark, which determines whether the show will live on in syndication heaven after its network run.

"I was sitting at the Museum of Television & Radio one day and the thought occurred to me that it is so difficult to get to the 100-episode milestone that I kind of wondered how many there were and who they were," Robert J. Dowling, editor and publisher of the trade newspaper, told The Associated Press.

"At the beginning of the year there are upwards of 400 scripts that are bought with the idea of getting on television," he said. "They're going to make 80 to 100 pilots. ... Out of that you're going to end up with maybe 20 on the air. As they go through the whole process, somewhere around two to three of them actually make it to 100 episodes."

The newspaper documented 296 shows that have crossed the threshold since the 1940s, but it's clear that it used to be much easier for programs to do well in the era of three TV television networks.

"Kraft Television Theatre," which started in 1947 had 585 episodes. "Dragnet" from 1952 had 342, and "The Beverly Hillbillies" from 1962 totaled 274.

Pastimes



Woods' top ranking on line at NEC Invitational

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP GOLF WRITER

AKRON, Ohio (AP)—Tiger Woods already lost out on the majors. Next up could be his No. 1 ranking.

The top candidate is Vijay Singh, who showed up at Firestone just 18 hours after winning the PGA Championship acting as if nothing had changed and he was ready to play the next tournament.

"You see some guys win and they have a little lull for a week, or they don't commit to the next week, or it's tiring for them to win," PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem said. "I saw him (Monday), and he's just ... he's just Vijay."

The next time Finchem sees him, he might be looking at the No. 1 player in the world.

Singh's playoff victory at Whistling Straits brought the 41-year-old Fijian to the brink of a goal not many thought possible two years ago.

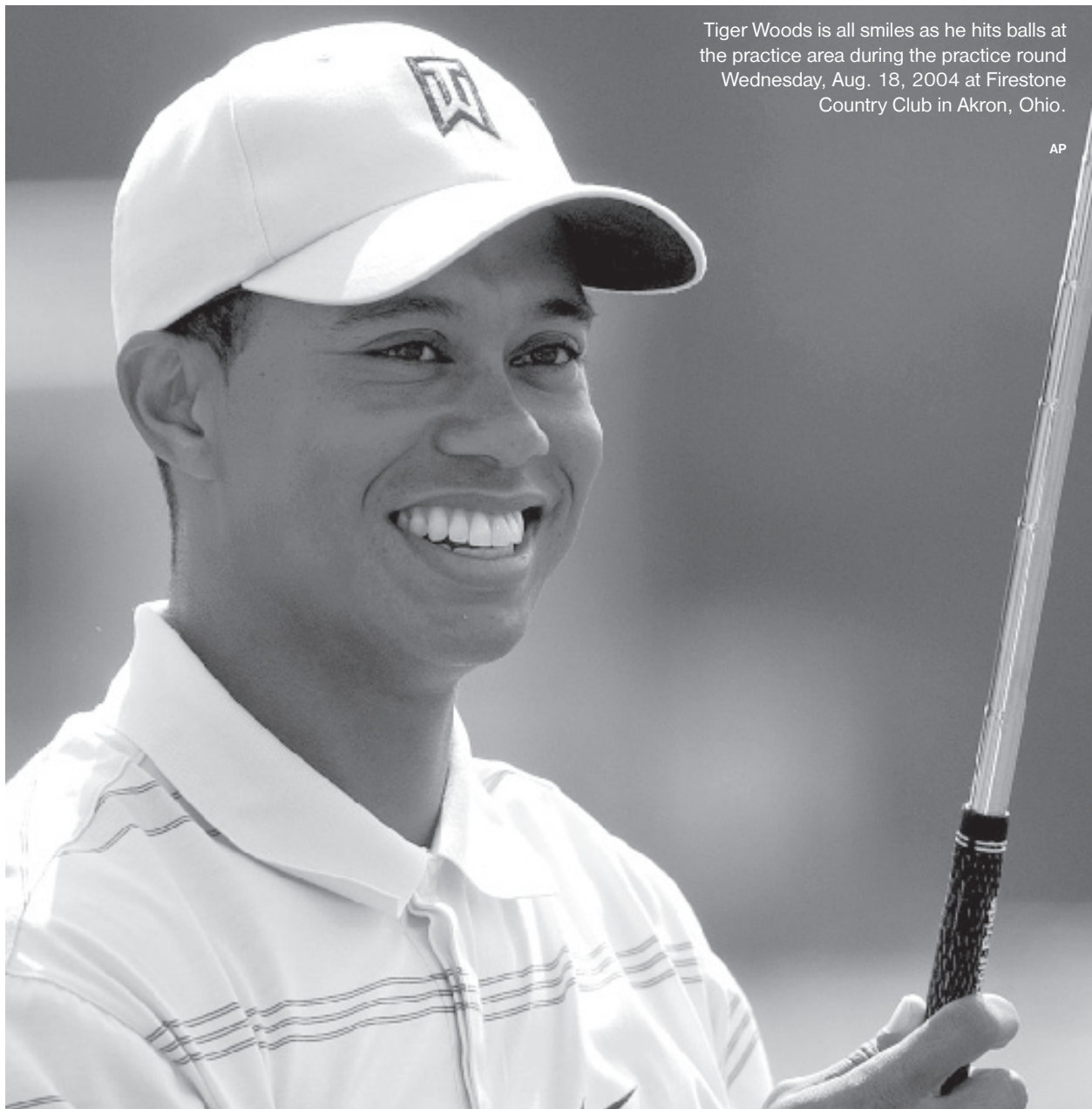
Having closed the gap to a mere one-tenth of a point, Singh needs only to finish ahead of Woods at the NEC Invitational to end Woods' record reign of 262 consecutive weeks atop the world ranking.

"I want to finish No. 1, and if I can do that, that would be great," Singh said. "That will be the ultimate goal for me - to win a major, win the money list and player of the year, and at the same time be No. 1 in the world. I'm very close, but my focus this week is this tournament."

"If I can pull this one off, then I'll probably take the rest of the year off."

Singh laughed, although everyone already knew he was kidding.

He loves to play tournament golf, so much that he thinks the world ranking system works against him. Singh already has won five times this year, compared with one victory for Woods. A year ago, Singh was a four-time winner and narrowly lost the PGA Tour



Tiger Woods is all smiles as he hits balls at the practice area during the practice round Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2004 at Firestone Country Club in Akron, Ohio.

AP

player of the year award to Woods and his five victories.

What counts is consistency, which is why Singh is so close to the top.

That is how Woods has stayed there for so long - a record 332 weeks since turning pro eight years ago, breaking the record Monday that Greg Norman (331

weeks) had set over a 12-year span.

Woods has been No. 1 for the last 262 weeks, dating to his victory in the 1999 PGA Championship.

And he is well aware that it could be gone over the course of four rounds on a Firestone South course that is playing longer and tougher than ever.

"As far as the No. 1 ranking, it's certainly a point of honor," Woods said Wednesday. "You've had to play hard and you've had to play well, and for me to have done it for as long as Greg has, I've been very consistent."

But it's not just consistency. Winning is a large part of the No.

Ravens leave door open for Deion to play

By **DAVID GINSBURG**
AP SPORTS WRITER



WESTMINSTER, Md. (AP)—The Baltimore Ravens are excited about the prospect of having Deion Sanders come out of retirement and be a part of their defensive backfield.

The question now is: Will he take them up on their offer?

The Ravens have told Sanders that if he wants to end his retirement of three years, he would be welcome to join the team. Sanders is working out at his Dallas home in an effort to determine if his 37-year-old body can take the punishment of playing in the NFL.

"He's obviously doing his due diligence to see if this is something he really wants to do," Ravens coach Brian Billick said Wednesday. "Certainly we'd love to have him in, and when we get to that point, he'll be in."

Ravens safety Corey Fuller, a good friend of Sanders, isn't so sure that Sanders is ready to put on a helmet and shoulder pads for the first time since 2000, when he was a member of the Washington Redskins. Sanders formally announced his retirement the day before the Redskins opened camp in 2001.

"I talk to him every day," Fuller said. "I know what he's going to do. The man said he's not coming. He's got four kids. It's not because he can't play anymore. It's just that the man has a lot going on outside of football."

But the Ravens are convinced that Sanders has yet to arrive at a final decision, and they're prepared to let him take his time in deciding if he wants to join the team.

"It's far enough along that when he feels he's ready, he's in," Billick said. "Deion is a professional. He doesn't want to come in here unless he's ready to go. We'll give him that kind of space, and when he feels he's physically at the right spot, then we'd love to have him."

Sanders made a name for himself at cornerback, a far more demanding position than where the Ravens would use him - as a fifth defensive back in passing situations. Therefore, Billick isn't worried about the possibility of Sanders perhaps being a step slower than when he was known as Prime Time.

"He's a special individual with special talents. He's not too old, I can promise you that," Billick said. "It will be a work in progress to a degree, but he's not too old. He's been out of it for

three years, which means he's fresh."

On that point, Fuller concurred. "Deion is in great shape. He has a gym in his house and works out all the time. But when you get older, it comes down to your mind," Fuller said. "When you've been off for three years, you get attached to other things."

Sanders, a former major league outfielder, worked out with the Texas Rangers prior to Wednesday night's game against the Cleveland Indians. He shagged flies in the outfield and took swings in the batting cage.

As he left the field, Sanders was evasive when asked about returning to the NFL.

"I'm here to talk about baseball," Sanders said. "Baseball questions only. I really miss baseball. I didn't know how much I missed it, being around the guys."

If Sanders wants to play for the Ravens, defensive coordinator Mike Nolan would happily draw up a game plan that would include him in the backfield.

"Adding depth is one thing, but adding quality depth is a whole different thing," Nolan said. "A player like that comes along, we'll do what fits that player. It will allow us to be more aggressive than we already are."

A player like that allows you to do just about anything."

Most of the Ravens are excited about the possibility, too.

"Deion brings excitement to the game," linebacker Adalius Thomas said. "I used to watch him as a kid, and now you get a chance to sit down with him and pick his brain. It will be very exciting when he does, uh, if he does come back."

Ravens wide receiver Kevin Johnson is excited about the prospect of running in practice against cornerback Chris McAlister, who is expected to arrive in camp next week, and Sanders, one of the finest defensive backs of the past 20 years.

"You figure, with him, Chris and Gary Baxter, you're going to get the best of both worlds," Johnson said. "You're going up against Chris, who's the best of his time right now, and Deion, one of the best of his time."

But the addition of Sanders could spell trouble for a player such as rookie cornerback Lance Frazier, who's striving to be part of the team.

"That would be another roster spot, right at the position that I'm playing," Frazier said. "That will get me either booted or put on practice squad."

1 ranking, which is why Woods is on the verge of losing it. His only victory this year was the Match Play Championship in February, and with only five tournaments left on his schedule, he most likely will end his streak of five consecutive years with at least five victories.

"Greg was No. 1 in the world for a long period of time and he was winning two to four a year, and I did the same thing," Woods said. "I did five-plus for five straight years, and now Vijay has won five times this year. That's how you do it. You don't get to No. 1 in the world by finishing top 10. You have to win."

And that's why Woods is holding out hope that No. 1 still belongs to him until someone takes it away.

His game has not been sharp all year, although Woods can't argue with the venue.

Firestone South has been one of his favorite tracks since he turned pro, never finishing lower than fifth in his six appearances and winning the NEC Invitational three straight times (1999-2001) in a variety of ways - by one shot, by 12 shots and in a seven-hole playoff against Jim Furyk for his only victory in the summer of '01.

"I think any time you come to an event where you've won before and you've had success, you automatically feel comfortable and confident, if your game is not up to form or if you're playing great," Woods said. "I've come in both ways into this tournament, and for some reason I've played well."

The NEC Invitational is for players on the Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup teams, the top 50 in the world ranking and winners of top tournaments around the world.

Knicks re-sign forward Baker



NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Knicks re-signed forward Vin Baker on Wednesday.

The 11-year veteran averaged 9.8 points and 5.2 rebounds in 54 games for the Knicks and Boston Celtics last season. He signed as a free agent in March, averaging 6.6 points and 4.1 rebounds in the final 17 games for the Knicks.

"Vin gave us a solid presence off the bench at the end of last season and in the playoffs," Knicks President Isiah Thomas said. "With a fresh start at training camp with the team, we know he'll be an even more productive force."

The 6-foot-11 Baker averaged 14.3 minutes in four playoff games, contributing 5.5 points and 3.0 rebounds in the Knicks' first-round loss to the New Jersey Nets.

Baker was the eighth overall pick by the Milwaukee Bucks in the 1993 draft and a four-time All-Star, but his battle with alcoholism led to his release by Boston.

Baker was shooting more than 50 percent for the Celtics before he was suspended—and subsequently had his contract terminated—for violating terms of his alcohol treatment program.

Woods aims to regain form at British Open

By **TIM DAHLBERG**
AP SPORTS COLUMNIST

TROON, Scotland (AP)—Tiger Woods has been hitting fairways this week, and his caddie, Steve Williams, hasn't been hitting anyone.

The British Open doesn't start until Thursday, of course, and things can change just as quickly as the quirky weather off the coast of west Scotland. Woods doesn't need to be reminded of that.

The last time the British Open was held in Scotland, he was not only an overwhelming favorite, but British bookies also fancied him to finish off the Grand Slam that year.

Incredibly, just two years later, he's not even the pick to win this week at Royal Troon. That honor would go to Ernie Els, who just a short time ago seemed baffled by the idea he could actually beat Woods when it really mattered.

Now, it seems, anyone—and that really means anyone—can beat Woods. Eight players have won major championships since he took the U.S. Open at Bethpage, N.Y., in 2002.

With each wayward drive, Woods sinks a little bit more toward mediocrity. The mystique is gone, and so is the intimidation other players used to feel every time he stuck a tee in the ground.

"Pure and simple, he can't drive the ball in the fairway," Nick Price said. "From all I've seen now the last five months, his off-the-tee game is so erratic, and there's no pattern to it because he's losing it right and left. Until such time as he starts getting the ball in the fairway, he's going to struggle.

"You have to be a great driver of the ball to win major championships."

Indeed you do, and Woods once was. Which, of course, brings us to the question of what Woods has been doing to become that great driver again.

Well, he's got a new driver for one, a big fat graphite shafted Nike that's just the type he once



Tiger Woods is seen during practice for the British Open at Royal Troon golf course in Troon, Scotland Wednesday July 14, 2004. The British Open is scheduled to start on Thursday July 15.

AP

scorned. He's longer than ever, but length has never been a problem for Woods.

Presumably he's been out practicing with it, though you might wonder where he's getting the time. He's got a fiancée and an increasing number of business interests and recreational pursuits away from golf.

Some of those are in Las Vegas, where Butch Harmon, his former swing guru, teaches. Woods' visits, though, have nothing to do with getting instruction from his estranged coach.

Last month he jetted there for a few days of gambling after finishing well off the pace at the U.S. Open. And just hours after he finished his final round at the Western Open near Chicago, he was spotted partying at a posh casino nightclub.

Coincidence? Maybe. Woods, like anyone else, has the right to blow off steam. He's certainly earned it after bearing the many responsibilities that came with being Tiger Woods over the last few years.

But Woods became great because of his singular focus on his golf game, as his father, Earl Woods, would be more than willing

to tell you. He became great by constant hours of practicing to come up with a short game as great as the shots he could seemingly manufacture at will off the tee.

Whether the same focus is still there is hard to figure out. Woods doesn't let anyone inside his private life, and he's not about to tell anyone what he's doing.

But if last month's U.S. Open is any indication, there are cracks in the armor. At Shinnecock Hills, Woods feuded publicly with Harmon even while his drives were going sideways, and he wasn't a factor on the weekend.

At the same time, his caddie became so annoyed at a photographer that he kicked his camera, then later went into the crowd and grabbed another one from an astonished spectator.

The boss doesn't like distractions, you know.

"I've always played my best when I've gone out and played—and stayed—focused on what I have to do and not worry about anything else," Woods said Tuesday.

Woods didn't say much else. He's become more taciturn than ever, insisting as always that everything is fine, while at the

same time refusing to be drawn into any specifics about his game or his swing.

Harmon speculated at the U.S. Open that his former student was in a "bit of denial" about everything, a statement that angered Woods mostly because it was made publicly.

Since then, Woods and Harmon have chatted and Woods said they patched up some of their differences. None of that chat concerned his golf swing, though, and Woods still stubbornly clings to the notion he can fix things himself.

Maybe he can. Maybe Woods knows something no one else knows and will find a way to do something he hasn't done since last October—win a stroke-play tournament.

Winning, of course, is the best way to quiet critics. If Woods can win his second British Open, people will quickly quit talking about his slump and return to talking about his chances of beating Jack Nicklaus' record of 18 major championship titles.

And maybe his caddie will get a clue and quit bullying people on his way around the course.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB

HOUSTON ASTROS-Fired Jimmy Williams, manager; Burt Hooton, pitching coach; and Harry Spilman, hitting coach. Named Phil Garner manager, Jim Hickey pitching coach, and Gary Gaetti hitting coach.

NBA

ATLANTA HAWKS-Signed C Jason Collier.
BOSTON CELTICS-Re-signed C Mark Blount to a six-year contract.
CHARLOTTE BOBCATS-Signed G Jason Hart and F Tamar Slay.
DALLAS MAVERICKS-Re-signed G Marquis Daniels to a five-year contract with a team option.
DETROIT PISTONS-Signed F Antonio McDyess to a four-year contract with a team option and G-F Carlos Delfino to a three-year contract with a team option.
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS-Re-signed C Adonal Foyle to a six-year contract.
LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS-Traded F-C Melvin Ely and G Eddie House to Charlotte for 2005 and 2006 second-round draft picks.
LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Traded C Shaquille O'Neal to Miami for F Lamar Odom, F Caron Butler, F-C Brian Grant and a future first-round draft pick.
MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES-Signed F Brian Cardinal to a six-year contract.
MILWAUKEE BUCKS-Signed C Etan Thomas to a six-year offer sheet.
PHILADELPHIA 76ERS-Signed F Brian Skinner to a multiyear contract.
PHOENIX SUNS-Signed G Quentin Richardson to a six-year offer sheet. Signed G Steve Nash to a six-year contract.
SAN ANTONIO SPURS-Re-signed F Bruce Bowen. Signed G Beno Udrih.
TORONTO RAPTORS-Signed G Rafer Alston to a five-year contract.
UTAH JAZZ-Signed F Carlos Boozer and C Mehmet Okur to six-year offer sheets. Re-signed G Carlos Arroyo to a four-year contract.

NFL

GREEN BAY PACKERS-Voided the trade of DE Jamal Reynolds to Indianapolis after Reynolds failed his physical and waived him.
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS-Released S Jason Perry.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES-Signed G Adrien Clarke to a four-year contract and LB Jeremiah Trotter to a one-year contract.

Olympics

U.S. OLYMPIC MEN'S ROAD CYCLING TEAM-Announced Levi Leipheimer will replace Lance Armstrong.

College

AUBURN-Named Casey Dunn assistant baseball coach.
DARTMOUTH-Named Maribel Sanchez Souther women's cross country coach.
EVERGREEN STATE-Named Kim Farnsworth athletic trainer.
HOUSTON-Named John Severance women's tennis coach.
N.J. CITY-Named Bridgette Quimpo softball coach.
NORTH DAKOTA STATE-Named Eric Viney women's assistant volleyball coach.
NORTHWESTERN-Announced men's junior basketball F Bernard Cote will transfer from Kentucky.
OKLAHOMA-Named Bill Pink director of women's basketball operations.
PALM BEACH ATLANTIC-Announced the resignation of Chris Bizol, men's and women's tennis coach, to take a position with Texas-Tyler.
RHODE ISLAND-Announced the resignation of Boe Pearman, women's basketball coach.
SANTA CLARA-Named M. Felipe Montoro assistant cross country coach and Steve Drake women's assistant basketball coach.
SETON HALL-Named Gerson Echeverry men's assistant soccer coach.
SKIDMORE-Named Darren Bennett women's basketball coach.
ST. FRANCIS, PA.-Named Wylie Crisanti women's lacrosse coach.
TULSA-Named Christy Connoyer softball coach.
WRIGHT STATE-Named Rob Cooper baseball coach.

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

RESTAURANT LEAGUE STANDINGS

Angel Wings	3	0
Country House	3	1
Jollibee	3	1
Capricciosa	2	1
Keeraku	1	2
LSG Sky Chefs	0	3
El Segundo	0	4

Armstrong, UConn pair win ESPY Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong was a repeat winner as male athlete of the year, and Connecticut basketball stars Diana Taurasi and Emeka Okafor were also honored Wednesday night at the 12th annual ESPY Awards.

Armstrong is currently attempting to win the Tour de France for the sixth straight time.

Taurasi won the best college female athlete for the second straight year as well as the best female athlete, while Okafor was chosen the best male college athlete. The two led their respective teams to NCAA championships last spring.

For the first time, fans determined the winners in all 36 categories, including the

19 cross-cutter honors that pit athletes from different sports against each other. More than 10 1/2 million votes were cast between June 21 and July 9.

Armstrong was honored as the best male athlete over home run king Barry Bonds, quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton Manning, and NBA star Kevin Garnett.

Taurasi was selected over golfer Annika Sorenstam and tennis star Justine Henin-Hardenne in the female athlete of the year category.

The Detroit Pistons, who beat the Los Angeles Lakers in last month's NBA Finals, were picked as the best team over the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots, World Series-winning Florida Marlins, Stanley

Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning and the UConn men's and women's basketball teams.

Detroit's Larry Brown won the best coach/manager award, and the Pistons were the winners in the new best upset category.

Among other winners were Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James, best breakthrough athlete; Masters champion Phil Mickelson, best male golfer and top championship performance; Manning, best NFL player; Garnett, best NBA player; Lauren Jackson, best WNBA player; Antonio Tarver, best boxer; Stewart Elliott, best jockey; Andy Roddick, best male tennis player, Gail Devers, female track and field, and Serena Williams, best female tennis player.

Golfer Tiger Woods, a winner of a record 15 ESPY awards, didn't win one for the first time since 1999. Bonds and Sorenstam rank second all-time with six such awards. Bonds won as best baseball player and Sorenstam as best female golfer.

George Weah, best known for his achievements on the soccer field, received the Arthur Ashe Courage Award for his humanitarian efforts in his war ravaged homeland of Liberia and other African countries.

The Ashe award is traditionally given to an athlete whose contributions transcend sports.

The ceremony was held at the Kodak Theater and will be televised Sunday by ESPN at 9 p.m. (EDT).

Prosecutor asks to retry Jayson Williams

FLEMINGTON, N.J. (AP)—The prosecutor in the Jayson Williams manslaughter case wants to retry the former NBA star in Hunterdon County.

In papers filed with the trial judge on Wednesday, First Assistant Hunterdon County Prosecutor Steven Lember argued that the retrial should be moved to Hunterdon County, where limousine driver Costas Christofi was killed by a blast from a shotgun handled by Williams.

"Just as the perceived existence of pretrial publicity led the court to change venue to Somerset County, the even-more extensive trial publicity in Somerset County necessitates a return to Hunterdon County," Lember wrote.

Superior Court Judge Edward Coleman moved the first trial to Somerset County because of extensive pretrial publicity.

The 36-year-old Williams was acquitted in April of ag-

gravated manslaughter, aggravated assault and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, but was convicted on four counts related to his efforts to cover up the shooting.

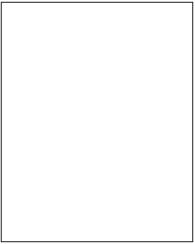
The jury deadlocked on the remaining reckless manslaughter count and a mistrial was declared. Lember decided to retry the case on that one charge.

The retrial is scheduled to start Jan. 10 in Somerville.

Christofi died in 2002 in Williams' Alexandria Township mansion.

If the judge denies Lember's request for a change of venue, the prosecutor has asked that a jury be brought in from a neighboring county with demographics similar to Hunterdon.

Lember will ask Coleman to reconsider his decision not to allow testimony about Williams' prior gun use, including the alleged shooting of his dog.



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